# *VENICE Preſerv'd:*

OR,

# A PLOT Diſcover'd.

A

# TRAGEDY.

*Written by Mr.* THOMAS OTWAY.

*LONDON:*

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Pbl. from Mr Brett-Smith

## To Her Grace the

# Duchess of *Portſmouth.*

Madam,

WERE it poſſible for me to let the World know, how intirely Your Grace's Goodneſs has devoted a poor Man to Your Service: Were there Words enough in Speech to expreſs the mighty Senſe I have of Your great Bounty towards me; ſurely I ſhould write and talk of it for ever: But Your Grace has given me ſo large a Theme, and laid ſo very vaſt a Foundation, that Imagination wants Stock to build upon it. I am as one dumb when I would ſpeak of it; and when I ſtrive to write, I want a Scale of Thought ſufficient to comprehend the Height of it. Forgive me then, Madam, if (as a poor Peaſant once made a Preſent of an Apple to an Emperor) I bring this ſmall Tribute, the humble Growth of my little Garden, and lay it at your Feet. Believe it is paid You with the utmoſt Gratitude: Believe, that, ſo long as I have thought to remember how very much I owe Your generous Nature, I will ever have a Heart that ſhall be grateful for it too. Your Grace, next Heaven, deſerves it amply from me: That gave me Life, but on a hard Condition; till Your



Stuff and write the fine play for money it dies

extended Favour taught me to prize the Gift, and took the heavy Burden it was clogg'd with from me, I mean hard Fortune. When I had Enemies, that with malicious Power kept back and ſhaded me from thoſe royal Beams, whoſe Warmth is all I have, or hope to live by; Your noble Pity and Compaſſion found me, where I was caſt backward from my Bleſſing, down in the Rear of Fortune, called me up, placed me in the Shine, and I have felt its Comfort. You have in that reſtor'd me to my native Right, for a ſteady Faith and Loyalty to my Prince was all the Inheritance my Father left me; and however hardly my ill Fortune deal with me, 'tis what I prize ſo well, that I never pawn'd it yet, and hope I ſhall never part with it. Nature and Fortune were certainly in League when You were born; and as the firſt took Care to give You Beauty enough to enſlave the Hearts of all the World; ſo the other reſolv'd to do its Merit Juſtice, that none but a Monarch, fit to rule the World, ſhould e'er poſſeſs it; and in it he had an Empire. The young Prince You have given him, by his blooming Virtues, early declares the mighty Stock he came from: And as You have taken all the pious Care of a dear Mother, and a prudent Guardian, to give him a noble and generous Education; may it ſucceed according to his Merits and Your Wiſhes: May he grow up to be a Bulwark to his Illuſtrious Father,

Father, and a Patron to his loyal Subjects; with Wiſdom and Learning to aſſiſt him, whenever call'd to his Councils; to defend his Right againſt the Incroachments of Republicans in his Senates; to cheriſh ſuch Men as ſhall be able to vindicate the Royal Cauſe; that good and fit Servants to the Crown may never be loſt for Want of a Protector. May he have Courage and Conduct fit to fight his Battles Abroad, and terrify his Rebels at Home: And, that all theſe may be yet more ſure, may he never, during the Spring-time of his Years, when thoſe growing Virtues ought with Care to be cheriſh'd, in order to their Ripening; may he never meet with vicious Natures, or the Tongues of faithleſs, ſordid, inſipid Flatterers, to blaſt 'em. To conclude, may he be as great as the Hand of Fortune (with his Honour) ſhall be able to make him: And may Your Grace, who are ſo good a Miſtreſs, and ſo noble a Patroneſs, never meet with a leſs grateful Servant, than,

*MADAM,*

*Your Grace's*

*intirely Devoted Creature,*

* THO. OTWAY.

# PROLOGUE.

*IN these distracted Times, when each Man dreads*
*The bloody Stratagems of busy Heads;*
*When we have fear'd three Years we know not what,*
*'Till Witnesses begin to die o' th' Rot;*
*What made our Poet meddle with a Plot?*
*Was't that he fancy'd, for the very Sake*
*And Name of Plot, his trifling Play might take?*
*For there's not in't one Inch-board Evidence,*
*But 'tis, he says, to Reason plain and Sense,*
*And that he thinks a plausible Defence.*
*Were Truth by Sense and Reason to be try'd,*
*Sure all our Swearers might be laid aside;*
*No, of such Tools our Author has no need,*
*To make his Plot, or make his Play succeed:*
*He, of black Bills, has no prodigious Tales,*
*Or* Spanish *Pilgrims cast ashore in* Wales:
*Here's not one murder'd Magistrate, at least,*
*Kept rank, like Ven'son, for a City Feast,*
*Grown four Days stiff, the better to prepare*
*And fit his pliant Limbs to ride in Chair.*
*Yet here's an Army rais'd, tho' under Ground,*
*But no Man seen, nor one Commission found:*
*Here is a Traytor too, that's very old,*
*Turbulent, subtle, mischievous, and bold,*
*Bloody, revengeful; and, to crown his Part,*
*Loves Fumbling with a Wench with all his Heart:*
*'Till, after having many Changes past,*
*In spite of Age (thanks t' Heav'n) is hang'd at last;*
*Next is a Senator that keeps a Whore,*
*In* Venice *none a higher Office bore,*

*To*

*To Lewdneſs ev'ry Night the Leacher ran;*
*Shew me, all* London, *ſuch another Man;*
*Match him at Mother* Creſwell's *if you can.*
O Poland, Poland! *had it been thy Lot,*
*T' have heard in Time of this* Venetian *Plot,*
*Thou ſurely choſen hadſt one King from thence,*
*And honour'd them, as thou haſt* England *ſince.*

Drama-

# Dramatis Perſonæ.

## MEN.

| | |
|---|---|
| Duke of *Venice*, | Mr. *D. Williams.* |
| *Priuli*, Father to *Belvidera*, a Senator, | Mr. *Bowman.* |
| *Antonio*, a fine Speaker in the Senate, | Mr. *Leigh.* |
| *Bedamar*, the *Spaniſh* Ambaſſador, | Mr. *Gillo.* |
| *Jaffier*, | Mr. *Betterton.* |
| *Pierre*, | Mr. *Smith.* |
| *Renault*, | Mr. *Wiltſhire.* |
| *Spinoſa*, | Mr. *Percival.* |
| *Theodore*, | |
| *Eliot*, | |
| *Revillido*, | |
| *Durand*, | |
| *Mezzana*, | |
| *Bramveil*, | |
| *Ternon*, | |
| *Brabe*, | |

Conſpirators.

## WOMEN.

| | |
|---|---|
| *Belvidera*, | Mrs. *Barry.* |
| *Aquilina*, | Mrs. *Currer.* |

Two Women, Attendants on *Belvidera.*
Two Women, Servants to *Aquilina.*
The Council of Ten.
Officer, Guard, Friar, Executioner, and Rabble.

*VENICE*

# *VENICE Preſerv'd:*

## OR,

# A PLOT Diſcover'd.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

*Enter* ***PRIULI*** and ***JAFFIER.***

***PRIULI.***

NO more! I'll hear no more; be gone and leave me.

*Jaff.* Not hear me! by my Suffering, but you ſhall!
My Lord, my Lord! I am not that abject Wretch
You think me: Patience! where's the Diſtance throws
Me back ſo far, but I may boldly ſpeak
In Right, tho' proud Oppreſſion will not hear me!

*Pri.* Have you not wrong'd me?

*Jaff.* Could my Nature e'er
Have brook'd Injuſtice, or the doing Wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myſelf,
To gain a Hearing from a cruel Father.
Wrong'd you!

*Pri.* Yes, wrong'd me in the niceſt Point,
The Honour of my Houſe; you have done me wrong.

You

You may remember (for I now will ſpeak,
And urge its Baſeneſs) when you firſt came Home
From Travel, with ſuch Hopes as made you look'd on
By all Men's Eyes, a Youth of Expectation;
Pleas'd with your growing Virtue, I receiv'd you;
Courted, and ſought to raiſe you to your Merits:
My Houſe, my Table, nay, my Fortune too,
My very ſelf was your's, you might have us'd me
To your beſt Service; like an open Friend
I treated, truſted you, and thought you mine:
When, in Requital of my beſt Endeavours,
You treacherouſly practis'd to undo me,
Seduc'd the Weakneſs of my Age's Darling,
My only Child, and ſtole her from my Boſom:
Oh! *Belvidera!*

*Jaff.* 'Tis to me you owe her.
Childleſs you had been elſe, and in the Grave
Your Name extinct, no more *Priuli* heard of.
You may remember, ſcarce five Years are paſt,
Since in your Brigantine you ſail'd to ſee
The *Adriatick* wedded by our Duke,
And I was with you: Your unſkilful Pilot
Daſh'd us upon a Rock; when to your Boat
You made for Safety: Enter'd firſt yourſelf;
Th' affrighted *Belvidera*, following next,
As ſhe ſtood trembling on the Veſſel's Side,
Was by a Wave waſh'd off into the Deep;
When inſtantly I plung'd into the Sea,
And, buffeting the Billows to her Reſcue,
Redeem'd her Life with half the Loſs of mine.
Like a rich Conqueſt, in one Hand I bore her,
And with the other daſh'd the ſaucy Waves,
That throng'd and preſs'd to rob me of my Prize:
I brought her, gave her your deſpairing Arms:
Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler Gratitude
'Roſe in her Soul: For from that Hour ſhe lov'd me,
'Till for her Life ſhe paid me with herſelf.

*Pri.* You ſtole her from me; like a Thief you ſtole her,
At dead of Night, that curſed Hour, you choſe

To

To rifle me of all my Heart held dear.
May all your Joys in her prove falſe like mine;
A ſterile Fortune, and a barren Bed,
Attend you both; continual Diſcord make
Your Days and Nights bitter and grievous ſtill:
May the hard Hand of a vexatious Need
Oppreſs and grind you; till at laſt you find
The Curſe of Diſobedience all your Portion.
*Jaff.* Half of your Curſe you have beſtow'd in vain:
Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful Loves
With a young Boy, ſweet as his Mother's Beauty:
May he live to prove more gentle than his Grandſire,
And happier than his Father.
*Pri.* Rather live
To bate thee for his Bread, and din your Ears
With hungry Cries; whilſt his unhappy Mother
Sits down and weeps in Bitterneſs of Want.
*Jaff.* You talk as if 'twould pleaſe you.
*Pri.* 'Twould, by Heaven!
Once ſhe was dear indeed; the Drops that fell
From my ſad Heart, when ſhe forgot her Duty,
The Fountain of my Life was not ſo precious:
But ſhe is gone; and, if I am a Man,
I will forget her.
*Jaff.* Would I were in my Grave.
*Pri.* And ſhe too with thee:
For, living here, you're but my curs'd Remembrancers,
I once was happy.
*Jaff.* You uſe me thus, becauſe you know my Soul
Is fond of *Belvidera:* You perceive
My Life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Oh! could my Soul ever have known Satiety;
Were I that Thief, the Doer of ſuch Wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me,
But I might ſend her back to you with Contumely,
And court my Fortune where ſhe would be kinder?
*Pri.* You dare not do't.
*Jaff.* Indeed, my Lord, I dare not.
My Heart, that awes me, is too much my Maſter:
Three Years are paſt ſince our firſt Vows were plighted,
During

During which Time the World muſt bear me Witneſs,
I've treated *Belvidera* like your Daughter,
The Daughter of a Senator of *Venice:*
Diſtinction, Place, Attendance, and Obſervance,
Due to her Birth, ſhe always has commanded:
Out of my little Fortune I have done this;
Becauſe (tho' hopeleſs e'er to win your Nature)
The World might ſee I lov'd her for herſelf,
Not as the Heireſs of the Great *Priuli*.

*Pri.* No more.

*Jaff.* Yes, all, and then adieu for ever.
There's not a Wretch that lives on common Charit
But's happier than me: For I have known
The luſcious Sweets of Plenty; every Night
Have ſlept with ſoft Content about my Head,
And never wak'd but to a joyful Morning:
Yet now muſt fall like a full Ear of Corn,
Whoſe Bloſſom 'ſcap'd, yet's wither'd in the Ripening.

*Pri.* Home, and be humble, ſtudy to retrench;
Diſcharge the lazy Vermin of thy Hall,
Thoſe Pageants of thy Folly:
Reduce the glittering Trappings of thy Wife
To humble Weeds, fit for thy little State:
Then to ſome ſuburb Cottage both retire;
Drudge to feed loathſome Life; get Brats, and ſtarve—
Home, Home, I ſay.—— [*Exit.*

*Jaff.* Yes, if my Heart would let me——
This proud, this ſwelling Heart: Home I would go,
But that my Doors are hateful to mine Eyes,
Fill'd and damm'd up with gaping Creditors.
Watchful as Fowlers when their Game will ſpring:
I've now not Fifty Ducats in the World,
Yet ſtill I am in Love, and pleas'd with Ruin.
Oh! *Belvidera!* Oh! ſhe is my Wife——
And we will bear our wayward Fate together,
But ne'er know Comfort more.

*Enter* Pierre.

*Pier.* My Friend, Good-morrow.
How fares the honeſt Part'ner of my Heart?
What, melancholy! not a Word to ſpare me!

*Jaff.*

*Jaff* I'm thinking, *Pierre*, how that damn'd ſtarving
Call'd Honeſty, got Footing in the World. [Quality,
*Pier.* Why, powerful Villainy firſt ſet it up,
For its own Eaſe and Safety: Honeſt Men
Are the ſoft eaſy Cuſhions on which Knaves
Repoſe and fatten: Were all Mankind Villains,
They'd ſtarve each other; Lawyers wou'd want Practice;
Cut-throats Rewards: Each Man would kill his Brother,
Himſelf, none would be pay'd or hang'd for Murder:
Honeſty! 'twas a Cheat invented firſt
To bind the Hands of bold deſerving Rogues,
That Fools and Cowards might ſit ſafe in Power,
And lord it uncontroul'd above their Betters.
*Jaff.* Then Honeſty is but a Notion?
*Pier.* Nothing elſe,
Like Wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd:
He that pretends to moſt too has leaſt Share in't:
'Tis a ragged Virtue. Honeſty! no more on't.
*Jaff.* Sure thou art honeſt?
*Pier.* So indeed Men think me.
But they are miſtaken, *Jaffier:* I am a Rogue
As well as they;
A fine gay bold fac'd Villain, as thou ſeeſt me:
'Tis true, I pay my Debts when they're contracted;
I ſteal from no Man; would not cut a Throat
To gain Admiſſion to a great Man's Purſe,
Or a Whore's Bed; I'd not betray my Friend,
To get his Place or Fortune; I ſcorn to flatter
A blown-up Fool above me, to cruſh the Wretch beneath
Yet, *Jaffier*, for all this I am a Villain. [me:
*Jaff.* A Villain!
*Pier.* Yes, and a moſt notorious Villain;
To ſee the Sufferings of my Fellow-creatures,
And own myſelf a Man: To ſee our Senators
Cheat the deluded People with a Shew
Of Liberty, which yet they ne'er muſt taſte of.
They ſay, by them our Hands are free from Fetters,
Yet whom they pleaſe they lay in baſeſt Bonds;
Bring whom they pleaſe to Infamy and Sorrow;
Drive us like Wrecks down the rough Tide of Power,
Whilſt no Hold is to ſave us from Deſtruction:

All that bear this are Villains, and I one,
Not to rouze up at the greateſt Call of Nature,
And check the Growth of theſe domeſtick Spoilers,
That make us Slaves, and tell us 'tis our Charter.
*Jaff.* Oh! *Aquilina!* Friend, to loſe ſuch Beauty,
The deareſt Purchaſe of thy noble Labours!
She was thy Right by Conqueſt, as by Love.
*Pier.* Oh *Jaffier!* I'ad ſo fix'd my Heart upon her,
That, whereſo'er I fram'd a Scheme of Life
For Time to come, ſhe was my only Joy,
With which I wiſh'd to ſweeten future Cares;
I fancy'd Pleaſures, none, but one that loves
And doats as I did, can imagine like 'em:
When in the Extremity of all theſe Hopes,
In the moſt charming Hour of Expectation,
Then, when our eager Wiſhes ſoar the higheſt,
Ready to ſtoop and graſp the lovely Game,
A haggard Owl, a worthleſs Kite of Prey,
With his foul Wings ſail'd in, and ſpoil'd my Quarry.
*Jaff.* I know the Wretch, and ſcorn him as thou hat'ſt him.
*Pier.* Curſe on the common Good that's ſo protected;
Where every Slave, that heaps up Wealth enough
To do much Wrong, becomes a Lord of Right:
I, who believ'd no Ill could e'er come near me,
Found in the Embraces of my *Aquilina*
A wretched old, but itching Senator,
A wealthy Fool, that had bought out my Title:
A Rogue that uſes Beauty like a Lamb-ſkin,
Barely to keep him warm; that filthy Cuckow, too,
Was, in my Abſence, crept into my Neſt,
And ſpoiling all my Brood of noble Pleaſure.
*Jaff.* Didſt thou not chace him thence?
*Pier.* I did, and drove
The rank old-bearded *Hirco* ſtinking Home:
The Matter was complain'd of in the Senate,
I ſummon'd to appear, and cenſur'd baſely,
For violating ſomething they call *Privilege*—
This was the Recompence of my Service:
Would I'd been rather beaten by a Coward;
A Soldier's Miſtreſs, *Jaffier*, is his Religion;

When

When that's profan'd, all other Ties are broken:
That even diſſolves all former Bonds of Service;
And from that Hour I think myſelf as free
To be the Foe as e'er the Friend of *Venice*——
Nay, dear Revenge, whene'er thou call'ſt, I'm ready.

*Jaff.* I think no Safety can be here for Virtue,
And grieve, my Friend, as much as thou to live
In ſuch a wretched State as this of *Venice*,
Where all agree to ſpoil the Publick Good:
And Villains fatten with the brave Man's Labours.

*Pier.* We've neither Safety, Unity, nor Peace, my Friend,
For the Foundation's loſt of common Good;
Juſtice is lame as well as blind amongſt us;
The Laws (corrupted to their Ends that make 'em)
Serve but for Inſtruments of ſome new Tyranny,
That every Day ſtarts up t'enſlave us deeper.
Now could this glorious Cauſe but find out Friends
To do it right, oh *Jaffier!* then might'ſt thou
Not wear theſe Seals of Woe upon thy Face:
The proud *Priuli* ſhould be taught Humanity,
And learn to value ſuch a Son as thou art.
I dare not ſpeak, but my Heart bleeds this Moment.

*Jaff.* Curs'd be the Cauſe, tho' I thy Friend be Part
Let me partake the Troubles of thy Boſom, [on't;
For I am us'd to Miſery, and perhaps
May find a Way to ſweeten't to thy Spirit.

*Pier.* Too ſoon 'twill reach thy Knowledge——.

*Jaff.* Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's Virtue in thy Friendſhip
Would make the ſaddeſt Tale of Sorrow pleaſing,
Strengthen my Conſtancy, and welcome Ruin.

*Pier.* Then thou art ruin'd?

*Jaff.* That I long ſince knew;
I and ill Fortune have been long acquainted.

*Pier.* I paſs'd this very Moment by thy Doors,
And found them guarded by a Troop of Villains;
The Sons of publick Rapine were deſtroying.
They told me, by the Sentence of the Law,
They had Commiſſion to ſeize all thy Fortune:
Nay more, *Priuli*'s cruel Hand hath ſign'd it.
Here ſtood a Ruffian with a horrid Face,

Lording it o'er a Pile of maſſy Plate,
Tumbled into a Heap for publick Sale;
There was another making villainous Jeſts
At thy undoing; he had ta'en Poſſeſſion
Of all thy ancient moſt domeſtick Ornaments,
Rich Hangings, intermix'd and wrought with Gold:
The very Bed, which on thy Wedding-Night
Receiv'd thee to the Arms of *Belvidera*;
The Scene of all thy Joys was violated,
By the coarſe Hands of filthy Dungeon Villains,
And thrown amongſt the common Lumber.

*Jaff.* Now thank Heav'n——

*Pier.* Thank Heav'n! for what?

*Jaff.* That I'm not worth a Ducat.

*Pier.* Curſe thy dull Stars, and the worſt Fate of *Venice*,
Where Brothers, Friends, and Fathers are all falſe,
Where there's no Truth, no Truth; where Innocence
Stoops under vile Oppreſſions, and Vice lords it.
Hadſt thou but ſeen, as I did, how at laſt
Thy beauteous *Belvidera*, like a Wretch
That's doom'd to Baniſhment, came weeping forth,
Shining thro' Tears, like *April*-Suns in Showers,
That labour to o'ercome the Cloud that loads 'em;
Whilſt two young Virgins, on whoſe Arms ſhe lean'd
Kindly look'd up, and at her Grief grew ſad,
As if they catch'd the Sorrows that fell from her;
E'en the lewd Rabble, that were gather'd round
To ſee the Sight, ſtood mute when they beheld her;
Govern'd their roaring Throats, and grumbled Pity:
I could have hugg'd the greaſy Rogues: They pleas'd me.

*Jaff.* I thank thee for this Story from my Soul,
Since now I know the worſt that can befall me:
Ah *Pierre!* I have a Heart that could have borne
The rougheſt Wrong my Fortune could have done me;
But when I think what *Belvidera* feels,
The Bitterneſs her tender Spirits taſte of,
I own myſelf a Coward: Bear my Weakneſs,
If, throwing thus my Arms about thy Neck,
I play the Boy, and blubber in thy Boſom:
Oh! I ſhall drown thee with my Sorrows.

*Pier.* Burn,

Firſt burn, and level *Venice* to thy Ruin.
What! Starve like Beggars Brats in froſty Weather,
Under a Hedge, and whine ourſelves to Death!
Thou, or thy Cauſe, ſhall never want Aſſiſtance,
Whilſt I have Blood or Fortune fit to ſerve thee:
Command my Heart; thou'rt every way its Maſter.
*Jaff.* No, there's a ſecret Pride in bravely dying.
*Pier.* Rats in Holes and Corners, Dogs run mad;
Man knows a brave Remedy for Sorrow;
Revenge, the Attribute of Gods; they ſtamp'd it
With their great Image on our Natures. Die!
Conſider well the Cauſe that calls upon thee:
And, if thou'rt baſe enough, die then: Remember
Thy *Belvidera* ſuffers, *Belvidera.*
Die——Damn firſt——what! Be decently interr'd
In a Church Yard, and mingle thy brave Duſt
With ſtinking Rogues that rot in dirty Winding-Sheets,
Surfeit ſlain Fools, the common Dung o'th' Soil!
*Jaff.* Oh!
*Pier.* Well ſaid, out with't, ſwear a little——
*Jaff.* Swear! By Sea and Air; by Earth, by Heav'n and Hell,
I will revenge my *Belvidera*'s Tears.
Hark thee my Friend——*Priuli*——is——a Senator,
*Pier.* A Dog.
*Jaff.* Agreed.
*Pier.* Shoot him.
*Jaff.* With all my Heart.
No more: Where ſhall we meet at Night!
*Pier.* I'll tell thee;
On the *Rialto* every Night at Twelve
I take my Evening's Walk of Meditation:
There we two'll meet, and talk of precious
Miſchief——
*Jaff.* Farewel.
*Pier.* At Twelve.
*Jaff.* At any Hour; my Plagues
Will keep me waking. [*Ex.* Pier.
Tell me why, good Heaven,
Thou mad'ſt me what I am, with all the Spirit,
Aſpiring Thoughts and elegant Deſires,

That fill the happieſt Man? Ah rather, why
Didſt thou not form me ſordid as my Fate,
Baſe-minded, dull, and fit to carry Burdens?
Why have I Senſe to know the Curſe that's on me?
Is this juſt Dealing, Nature? *Belvidera!*

*Enter* Belvidera.

Poor *Belvidera!*

*Bel.* Lead me, lead me, my Virgins,
To that kind Voice. My Lord, my Love, my Refuge?
Happy my Eyes, when they behold thy Face!
My heavy Heart will leave its doleful Beating
At Sight of thee, and bound with ſprightful Joys.
Oh ſmile! as when our Loves were in their Spring,
And chear my fainting Soul.

*Jaff.* As when our Loves
Were in their Spring! has then our Fortune chang'd?
Art thou not *Belvidera*, ſtill the ſame,
Kind, good, and tender, as my Arms firſt found thee?
If thou art alter'd, where ſhall I have Harbour?
Where eaſe my loaded Heart? Oh! where complain?

*Bel.* Does this appear like Change, or Love decaying,
When thus I throw myſelf into thy Boſom,
With all the Reſolution of ſtrong Truth?
Beats not my Heart as 'twou'd alarm thine
To a new Charge of Bliſs? I joy more in thee,
Than did thy Mother when ſhe hugg'd thee firſt,
And bleſs'd the Gods for all her Travel paſt.

*Jaff.* Can there in Women be ſuch glorious Faith?
Sure all ill Stories of thy Sex are falſe:
Oh Woman! lovely Woman! Nature made thee
To temper Man: We had been Brutes without you:
Angels are painted fair to look like you:
There's in you all that we believe of Heav'n,
Amazing Brightneſs, Purity and Truth,
Eternal Joy, and everlaſting Love.

*Bel.* If Love be Treaſure, we'll be wond'rous rich;
I have ſo much my Heart will ſurely break with't:
Vows can't expreſs it. When I would declare
How great's my Joy, I'm dumb with the big Thought;
I ſwell, and ſigh, and labour with my Longing.
O! lead me to ſome Deſert wide and wild,

Barren

Barren as our Misfortunes, where my Soul
May have its Vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high Heav'ns and ev'ry liſt'ning Planet,
With what a boundleſs Shock my Boſom's fraught;
Where I may throw my eager Arms about thee,
Give Looſe to Love, with Kiſſes kindling Joy,
And let off all the Fire that's in my Heart.

*Jaff.* Oh *Belvidera!* doubly I'm a Beggar,
Undone by Fortune, and in Debt to thee;
Want, worldly Want, that hungry meagre Fiend,
Is at my Heels, and chaces me in View.
Canſt thou bear Cold and Hunger? can theſe Limbs,
Fram'd for the tender Offices of Love,
Endure the bitter Gripes of ſmarting Poverty?
When baniſh'd by our Miſeries abroad,
(As ſuddenly we ſhall be) to ſeek out
In ſome fair Climate, where our Names are Strangers,
For charitable Succour; wilt thou then,
When in a Bed of Straw we ſhrink together,
And the bleak Winds ſhall whiſtle round our Heads;
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? wilt thou then
Huſh my Cares thus, and ſhelter me with Love?

*Bel.* Oh! I will love thee, even in Madneſs love thee:
Tho' my diſtracted Senſes ſhould forſake me,
I'd find ſome Intervals, when my poor Heart
Should 'ſwage itſelf, and be let looſe to thine.
Tho' the bare Earth be all our Reſting-Place,
Its Roots our Food, ſome Clift our Habitation,
I'll make this Arm a Pillow for thy Head;
As thou ſighing ly'ſt, and ſwell'd with Sorrow,
Creep to thy Boſom, pour the Balm of Love
Into thy Soul, and kiſs thee to thy Reſt;
Then praiſe our God, and watch thee till the Morning.

*Jaff.* Hear this, you Heav'ns! and wonder how you made her.
Reign, reign, ye Monarchs, that divide the World,
Buſy Religion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and Happineſs like mine;
Like gaudy Ships, the obſequious Billows fall,
And riſe again, to lift you in your Pride;
They wait but for a Storm, and then devour you:

I, in

I, in my private Bark, already wreck'd,
Like a poor Merchant driv'n to unknown Land,
That had by Chance pack'd up his choiceſt Treaſure
In one dear Casket, and ſav'd only that;
Since I muſt wander farther on the Shore
Thus hug my little, but my precious, Store,
Reſolv'd to ſcorn, and truſt my Fate no more. *Ex.*

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## ACT II. SCENE I.

*Enter* Pierre, *and* Aquilina.

*Aqui.* BY all thy Wrongs, thou'rt dearer to my Arms,
Than all the Wealth of *Venice:* Prithee ſtay,
And let us love to Night.

*Pier.* No: There's Fool,
There's Fool about thee: When a Woman ſells
Her Fleſh to Fools, her Beauty's loſt to me;
They leave a tainted Sully, where they've paſs'd;
There's ſuch a baneful Quality about 'em,
E'en ſpoils Complexions with their Nauſeouſneſs;
They infect all they touch; I cannot think
Of taſting any Thing a Fool has pall'd.

*Aqui.* I loath and ſcorn that Fool thou mean'ſt as much,
Or more than thou canſt; but the Beaſt has Gold
That makes him neceſſary; Power too,
To qualify my Character, and poiſe me
Equal with peeviſh Virtue, that beholds
My Liberty with Envy: In their Hearts
They're looſe as I am; but an ugly Power
Sits in their Faces, and frights Pleaſures from them.

*Pier.* Much good may't do you, Madam, with your Senator.

*Aqui.* My Senator! why canſt thou think that Wretch
E'er fill'd thy *Aquilina*'s Arms with Pleaſure?
Think'ſt thou, becauſe I ſometimes give him Leave
To foil himſelf at what he is unfit for;
Becauſe I force myſelf t'endure and ſuffer him,
Think'ſt thou I love him? No, by all the Joys
Thou ever gav'ſt me, his Preſence is my Penance;

The

The worſt thing an old Man can be's a Lover,
A mere *Memento mori* to poor Woman.
I never lay by his decrepid Side,
But all that Night I ponder'd on my Grave.
*Pier.* Would he were well ſent thither.
*Aqui.* That's my Wiſh too:
For then, my *Pierre*, I might have Cauſe with Pleaſure
To play the Hypocrite: Oh! how I could weep
Over the dying Dotard, and kiſs him too,
In hopes to ſmother him quite; then, when the Time
Was come to pay my Sorrows at his Funeral,
(For he has already made me Heir to Treaſures
Wou'd make me out-act a real Widow's Whining)
How could I frame my Face to fit my Mourning!
With wringing Hands attend him to his Grave,
Fall ſwooning on his Hearſe; take mad Poſſeſſion
E'en of the diſmal Vault where he lay buried,
There, like th' *Epheſian* Matron, dwell, till thou,
My lovely Soldier, com'ſt to my Deliverance;
Then, throwing up my Veil with open Arms
And laughing Eyes, run to new dawning Joy.
*Pier.* No more, I've Friends to meet me here to Night,
And muſt be private. As you prize my Friendſhip,
Keep up your Coxcomb; let him not pry nor liſten,
Nor friſk about the Houſe, as I have ſeen him,
Like a tame mumping Squirrel with a Bell on;
Curs will be abroad to bite him, if you do.
*Aqui.* What Friends to meet! mayn't I be of your Council!
*Pier.* How! A Woman ask Queſtions out of Bed!
Go to your Senator, ask him what paſſes
Amongſt his Brethren: He'll hide nothing from you:
But pump not me for Politicks. No more.
Give Order, that whoever in my Name
Comes here, receive Admittance. So, good Night.
*Aqui.* Muſt we ne'er meet again! embrace no more?
Is Love ſo ſoon and utterly forgotten? (on't.
*Pier* As you henceforward treat your Fool, I'll think
*Aqui.* Curs'd be all Fools, and doubly curs'd myſelf,
The worſt of Fools——I die if he forſakes me;
And how to keep him Heav'n or Hell inſtruct me [*Ex.*

SCENE

## SCENE *the* Rialto.

*Enter* Jaffier.

*Jaff.* I'm here; and thus the Shades of Night around me,
I look as if all Hell were in my Heart,
And I in Hell. Nay, ſurely 'tis ſo with me; ——
For, every Step I tread, methinks ſome Fiend
Knocks at my Breaſt, and bids it not be quiet.
Iv'e heard how deſperate Wretches, like myſelf,
Have wander'd out at this dead Time of Night,
To meet the Foe of Mankind in his Walk:
Sure I'm ſo curs'd, that, tho' of Heav'n forſaken,
No Miniſter of Darkneſs cares to tempt me.
Hell, Hell, why ſleep'ſt thou?

*Enter* Pierre.

*Pier.* Sure I've ſtaid too long:
The Clock has ſtruck, and I may loſe my Proſelyte.
Speak, who goes there?

*Jaff.* A Dog that comes to howl
At yonder Moon. What's he that aſks the Queſtion?

*Pier.* A Friend to Dogs, for they are honeſt Creatures,
And ne'er betray their Maſters, never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, Friend *Jaffier!*

*Jaff.* The ſame. O *Pierre*, thou'rt come in Seaſon,
I was juſt going to pray.

*Pier.* Ah! that's mechanick;
Prieſts make a Trade on't, and yet ſtarve by't too;
No Praying; it ſpoils Buſineſs, and Time's precious.
Where's *Belvidera?*

*Jaff* For a Day or two
I've lodg'd her privately, till I ſee farther
What Fortune will do with me. Prithee, Friend,
If thou would'ſt have me fit to hear good Counſel,
Speak not of *Belvidera* ——

*Pier.* Speak not of her!

*Jaff.* Oh no!

*Pier.* Nor name her? May be I wiſh her well.

*Jaff.* Whom well?

*Pier.* Thy Wife, thy lovely *Belvidera.*

I hope

I hope a Man may wiſh his Friend's Wife well,
And no Harm done.
*Jaff.* Y' are merry, *Pierre.*
*Pier.* I am ſo:
Thou ſhalt ſmile too, and *Belvidera* ſmile;
We'll all rejoice, here's ſomething to buy Pins.
[*Gives him a Purſe.*
Marriage is chargeable.
*Jaff.* I but half wiſh'd
To ſee the Devil, and he's here already. Well!
What muſt this buy, Rebellion, Murder, Treaſon?
Tell me which Way I muſt be damn'd for this.
*Pier.* When laſt we parted, we'd no Qualms like theſe,
But entertain'd each other's Thoughts like Men,
Whoſe Souls were well acquainted. Is the World
Reform'd ſince our laſt Meeting? What new Miracles
Have happen'd? Has *Priuli*'s Heart relented?
Can he be honeſt?
*Jaff.* Kind Heav'n, let heavy Curſes
Gall his old Age; Cramps, Aches rack his Bones,
And bittereſt Diſquiet wring his Heart.
Oh! let him live, till Life become his Burden;
Let him groan under't long, linger an Age
In the worſt Agonies and Pangs of Death,
And find its Eaſe, but late.
*Pier.* Nay, could'ſt thou not
As well, my Friend, have ſtretch'd the Curſe to all
The Senate round, as to one ſingle Villain?
*Jaff.* But Curſes ſtick not: Could I kill with Curſing,
By Heav'n I know not thirty Heads in *Venice*
Should not be blaſted: Senators ſhould rot
Like Dogs on Dunghils: But their Wives and Daughters
Die of their own Diſeaſes. Oh! for a Curſe
To kill him!
*Pier.* Daggers, Daggers are much better.
*Jaff.* Ha!
*Pier.* Daggers.
*Jaff.* But where are they?
*Pier.* Oh! a Thouſand
May be diſpos'd of in honeſt Hands in *Venice.*

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* Thou talk'ſt in Clouds.
*Pier.* But yet a Heart half wrong'd,
As thine has been, would find the Meaning, *Jaffier.*
*Jaff.* A thouſand Daggers all in honeſt Hands!
And have not I a Friend will ſtick one here?
*Pier.* Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cheriſh'd
T' a nobler Purpoſe, I would be that Friend.
But thou haſt better Friends; Friends, whom thy Wrongs
Have made thy Friends; Friends worthy to be call'd ſo.
I'll truſt thee with a Secret: There are Spirits
This Hour at work. But as thou art a Man,
Whom I have pick'd and choſen from the World,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I've told thee that which only Gods,
And Men like Gods, are privy to, then ſwear
No Chance or Change ſhall wreſt it from thy Boſom.
*Jaff.* When thou would'ſt bind me, is there Need of Oaths? [ters)
(Green-ſickneſs Girls loſe Maidenheads with ſuch Coun-
For thou'rt ſo near my Heart, that thou may'ſt ſee
Its Bottom, ſound its Strength and Firmneſs to thee:
Is Coward, Fool, or Villain, in my Face?
If I ſeem none of theſe, I dare believe
Thou would'ſt not uſe me in a little Cauſe,
For I am fit for Honour's rougheſt Taſk;
Nor never yet found Fooling was my Province:
And for a villainous inglorious Enterprize,
I know thy Heart ſo well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, ſet it to what Point thou wilt.
*Pier.* Nay, 'tis a Cauſe thou wilt be fond of, *Jaffier*;
For it is founded on the nobleſt Baſis,
Our Liberties, our natural Inheritance;
There's no Religion, no Hypocriſy in't;
We'll do the Buſineſs, and ne'er faſt and pray for't;
Openly act a Deed the World may gaze
With Wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.
*Jaff.* For Liberty!
*Pier.* For Liberty, my Friend;
Thou ſhalt be freed from baſe *Priuli*'s Tyranny,
And thy ſequeſter'd Fortunes heal'd again:
I ſhall be free from thoſe opprobrious Wrongs.

That

That preſs me now, and bend my Spirit downward.
All *Venice* free, and every growing Merit
Succeed to its juſt Right: Fools ſhall be pull'd
From Wiſdom's Seat; thoſe baleful unclean Birds,
Thoſe lazy Owls, who (perch'd near Fortune's Top)
Sit only watchful with their heavy Wings
To cuff down new fledg'd Virtues, that would riſe
To nobler Heights, and make the Grove harmonious.

*Jaff.* What can I do?

*Pier.* Canſt thou not kill a Senator?

*Jaff.* Were there one wiſe or honeſt, I could kill him,
For herding with that Neſt of Fools and Knaves.
By all my Wrongs, thou talk'ſt as if Revenge
Were to be had; and the brave Story warms me.

*Pier.* Swear then!

*Jaff.* I do, by all thoſe glittering Stars,
And yon great ruling Planet of the Night,
By all good Powers above, and ill below,
By Love and Friendſhip dearer than my Life,
No Pow'r or Death ſhall make me falſe to thee.

*Pier.* Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my Heart.
A Council's held hard by, where the Deſtruction
Of this great Empire's hatching: There I'll lead thee.
But be a Man, for thou'rt to mix with Men
Fit to diſturb the Peace of all the World,
And rule it when 'tis wildeſt ——

*Jaff.* I give thee Thanks
For this kind Warning: Yes, I'll be a Man;
And charge thee, *Pierre*, whene'er thou ſeeſt my Fears
Betray me leſs, to rip this Heart of mine
Out of my Breaſt, and ſhew it for a Coward's.
Come, let's be gone, for from this Hour I chace
All little Thoughts, all tender human Follies
Out of my Boſom: Vengeance ſhall have Room:
Revenge!

*Pier.* And Liberty!

*Jaff.* Revenge! Revenge——

*The* SCENE *changes to* Aquilina's *Houſe, the* Greek *Courtezan.*

*Enter* Renault.

*Ren.* Why was my Choice, Ambition, the worſt Ground

A Wretch can build on? 'tis indeed, at Diſtance,
A good Proſpect, tempting to the View;
The Height delights us, and the Mountain-top
Looks beautiful, becauſe 'tis nigh to Heav'n;
But we ne'er think how ſandy's the Foundation,
What Storm will batter, and what Tempeſt ſhake us.
Who's there?

*Enter* Spinoſa.

*Spin. Renault*, Good-morrow, for, by this Time,
I think the Scale of Night has turn'd the Balance,
And weighs up Morning: Has the Clock ſtruck Twelve?

*Ren.* Yes; Clocks will go as they are ſet: But Man,
Irregular Man's ne'er conſtant, never certain:
I've ſpent at leaſt three precious Hours of Darkneſs
In waiting dull Attendance; 'tis the Curſe
Of diligent Virtue to be mixt, like mine,
With giddy Tempers, Souls but half reſolv'd.

*Spin.* Hell ſeize that Soul amongſt us, it can frighten.

*Ren.* What's then the Cauſe that I am here alone?
Why are we not together?

*Enter* Eliot.

O, Sir, welcome!
You are an *Engliſhman:* When Treaſon's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been behind-hand.
In what Whore's Lap have you been lolling?
Give but an *Engliſhman* his Whore and Eaſe,
Beef and a Sea-coal Fire, he's your's for ever.

*Eli. Frenchman*, you are ſaucy.

*Ren.* How?

*Enter* Bedamar *the Ambaſſador*, Theodore, Bramveil, Durand, Brabe, Revillido, Mezzana, Ternon, Retroſi, *Conſpirators.*

*Bed.* At Difference, fie!
Is this a Time for Quarrels? Thieves and Rogues
Fall out and brawl: ſhould Men of your high Calling,
Men ſeparated by the Choice of Providence
From the groſs Heap of Mankind, and ſet here
In this Aſſembly as in one great Jewel,
T' adorn the braveſt Purpoſe it e'er ſmil'd on;
Should you, like Boys, wrangle for Trifles?

*Ren.* Boys! *Bed.*

*Bed. Renault*, thy Hand.
*Ren.* I thought I'd given my Heart
Long ſince to every Man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it truſted with ſuch Tempers,
That can't forgive my forward Age its Weakneſs.
*Bed. Eliot*, thou once had'ſt Virtue; I have ſeen
Thy ſtubborn Temper bend with God-like Goodneſs,
Not half thus courted: 'Tis thy Nation's Glory,
To hug the Foe that offers brave Alliance.
Once more embrace, my Friends—we'll all embrace—
United thus, we are the mighty Engine
Muſt twiſt this rooted Empire from its Baſis.
Totters not it already?
*Eli.* Would 'twere tumbling.
*Bed.* Nay, it ſhall down: This Night we ſeal its Ruin.

*Enter* Pierre.

Oh! *Pierre*, thou art welcome.
Come to my Breaſt, for by its Hopes thou look'ſt
Lovelily dreadful, and the Fate of *Venice*
Seems on thy Sword already. Oh! my *Mars!*
The Poets, that firſt feign'd a God of War,
Sure propheſy'd of thee.
*Pier.* Friends, Was not *Brutus*,
(I m an that *Brutus*, who in open Senate
Stabb'd the firſt *Cæſar* that uſurp'd the World)
A ga lant Man?
*Ren.* Yes, and *Catiline* too;
Tho' Story wrong his Fame: For he conſpir'd
To prop the reeling Glory of his Country:
His Cauſe was good.
*Bed.* And our's as much above it,
As, *Renault*, thou'rt ſuperior to *Cethegus*,
Or *Pierre* to *Coſſius*.
*Pier.* Then to what we aim at
When do we ſtart? or muſt we talk for ever?
*Bed.* No. *Pierre*, the Deed's near Birth: Fate ſeems to have ſet
The Buſineſs up, and given it to our Care:
I hope there's not a Heart nor Hand amongſt us,
But is firm and ready.
*All.* All!

We'll die with *Bedamar.*
*Bed.* O Men
Matchleſs! as will your Glory be hereafter:
The Game is for a matchleſs Prize, if won:
If loſt, diſgraceful Ruin.
*Ren.* Who can loſe it?
The publick Stock's a Beggar; one *Venetian*
Truſts not another: Look into their Stores
Of general Safety; empty Magazines,
A tatter'd Fleet, a murmuring unpaid Army,
Bankrupt Nobility, a harraſs'd Commonalty,
A factious, giddy, and divided Senate,
Is all the Strength of *Venice:* Let's deſtroy it;
Let's fill their Magazines with Arms to awe them,
Man out their Fleet, and make their Trade maintain it;
Let looſe the murmuring Army on their Maſters,
To pay themſelves with Plunder; lop their Nobles
To the baſe Roots, whence moſt of 'em firſt ſprung;
Enſlave the Rout, whom Smarting will make humble;
Turn out their droning Senate, and poſſeſs
That Seat of Empire which our Souls were fram'd for.
*Pier.* Ten-thouſand Men are armed at your Nod,
Commanded all by Leaders fit to guide
A Battle for the Freedom of the World:
This wretched State has ſtarv'd 'em in its Service.
And, by your Bounty quicken'd, they're reſolv'd
To ſerve your Glory; and revenge their own:
They've all their different Quarters in this City,
Watch for the Alarm, and grumble 'tis ſo tardy.
*Bed.* I doubt not, Friend, but thy unweary'd Diligence
Has ſtill kept waking, and it ſhall have Eaſe;
After this Night it is reſolv'd we meet
No more till *Venice* owns us for her Lords.
*Pier.* How lovelily the *Adriatic* Whore,
Dreſs'd in her Flames, will ſhine! devouring Flames!
Such as ſhall burn her to the watery Bottom,
And hiſs in her Foundation.
*Bed.* Now if any
Amongſt us, that owns this glorious Cauſe,
Have Friends or Intereſt he'd wiſh to ſave,
Let it be told: The general Doom is ſeal'd:

But

But I'd forego the Hopes of a World's Empire,
Rather than wound the Bowels of my Friend.
*Pier.* I muſt confeſs, you there have touch'd my [Weakneſs.
I have a Friend, hear it! ſuch a Friend:
My Heart was ne'er ſhut to him. Nay, I'll tell you,
He knows the very Buſineſs of this Hour:
But he rejoices in the Cauſe, and loves it:
We've chang'd a Vow to live and die together,
And he's at Hand to ratify it here.
*Ren.* How! all betray'd.
*Pier.* No——I've dealt nobly with you:
I've brought my All into the publick Stock:
I'ad but one Friend, and him I'll ſhare amongſt you:
Receive and cheriſh him; or if, when ſeen
And ſearch'd, you find him worthleſs; as my Tongue
Has lodg'd this Secret in his faithful Breaſt,
To eaſe your Fears, I wear a Dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you Reſt.
Come forth, thou only Good I e'er could boaſt of.

*Enter* Jaffier *with a Dagger.*

*Bed.* His Preſence bears the Shew of manly Virtue.
*Jaff.* I know you'll wonder all, that, thus uncall'd,
I dare approach this Place of fatal Councils;
But I'm amongſt you, and by Heav'n it glads me,
To ſee ſo many Virtues thus united,
To reſtore Juſtice, and dethrone Oppreſſion.
Command this Sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this Breaſt; but, if you think it worthy
To cut the Throats of Reverend Rogues in Robes,
Send me into the curs'd aſſembled Senate:
It ſhrinks not, tho' I meet a Father there.
Wou'd you behold this City flaming? Here's
A Hand ſhall bear a lighted Torch at Noon
To th' Arſenal, and ſet its Gates on Fire.
*Ren.* You talk this well, Sir.
*Jaff.* Nay——by Heav'n I'll do this.
Come, come, I read Diſtruſt in all your Faces;
You fear me a Villain, and indeed it's odd
To hear a Stranger talk thus, at firſt Meeting,
Of Matters that have been ſo well debated;
But I come ripe with Wrongs, as you with Councils:

I hate this Senate, am a Foe to *Venice*;
A Friend to none, but Men reſolv'd like me,
To puſh on Miſchief. Oh! did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!
*Bed. Pierre*, I muſt embrace him,
My Heart beats to this Man as if it knew him.
*Ren.* I never lov'd theſe Huggers.
*Jaff.* Still I ſee
The Cauſe delights me not. Your Friends ſurvey me,
As I were dangerous——But I come arm'd
Againſt all Doubts, and to your Truſt will give
A Pledge worth more than all the World can pay for,
M. *Belvidera.* Ho! my *Belvidera!*
*Bed.* What Wonder next?
*Jaff.* Let me intreat you,
As I have henceforth Hope to call ye Friends,
That all but the Ambaſſador, this
Grave Guide of Councils, with my Friend that owns me,
Withdraw a While to ſpare a Woman's Bluſhes.
[Exeunt *all but* Bed Ren. Jaff. Pier.
*Bed. Pierre*, whither will this Ceremony lead us?
*Jaff.* My *Belvidera! Belvidera!*
*Enter* Belvidera.
*Belv.* Who?
Who calls ſo loud at this late peaceful Hour?
That Voice was wont to come in gentle Whiſpers,
And fill my Ears with the ſoft Breath of Love:
Thou hourly Image of my Thoughts, where art thou?
*Jaff.* Indeed 'tis late.
*Belv.* Oh! I have ſlept and dreamt,
And dreamt again: Where haſt thou been, thou Loiterer?
Tho' my Eyes clos'd, my Arms have ſtill been open'd;
Stretch'd every Way betwixt my broken Slumbers,
To ſearch if thou wer't come to crown my Reſt:
There's no Repoſe without thee: Oh! the Day
Too ſoon will break, and wake us to our Sorrow:
Come, come to Bed, and bid thy Cares Good night.
*Jaff.* Oh! *Belvidera!* we muſt change the Scene
In which the paſt Delights of Love were taſted:
The Poor ſleep little; we muſt learn to watch
Our Labours late and early every Morning;

'Midſt

'Midſt Winter Froſts, thin clad and fed with Sparing,
Riſe to our Toils, and drudge away the Day.

*Belv.* Alas! where am I! whither is't you lead me!
Methinks I read Diſtraction in your Face,
Something leſs gentle than the Fate you tell me:
You ſhake and tremble too! your Blood runs cold!
Heav'ns guard my Love, and bleſs his Heart with Patience.

*Jaff.* That I have Patience, let our Fate bear Witneſs,
Who has ordain'd it ſo, that thou and I,
(Thou, the divineſt Good Man e'er poſſeſs'd,
And I, the wretched'ſt of the Race of Man)
This very Hour, without one Tear, muſt part.

*Belv.* Part! muſt we part? Oh! am I then forſaken?
Will my Love caſt me off? Have my Misfortunes
Offended him ſo highly, that he'll leave me?
Why drag you from me? Whither are you going?
My Dear! my Life! my Love!

*Jaff.* Oh! Friends!

*Belv* Speak to me.

*Jaff.* Take her from my Heart,
She'll gain ſuch Hold elſe, I ſhall ne'er get looſe;
I charge thee take her, but with tender'ſt Care,
Relieve her Troubles, and aſſwage her Sorrows.

*Ren.* Riſe, Madam, and command amongſt your Servants.

*Jaff.* To you, Sirs, and your Honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this, when I prove unworthy——
[*Gives a Dagger.*
You know the reſt ——Then ſtrike it to her Heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy Years
Lay in her Arms, and each Night repeated
The paſſionate Vows ſtill of increaſing Love,
Sent that Reward for all her Truth and Sufferings.

*Belv.* Nay, take my Life, ſince he has ſold it cheaply;
Or ſend me to ſome diſtant Clime your Slave;
But let it be far off, leſt my Complainings
Should reach his guilty Ears, and ſhake his Peace.

*Jaff.* No, *Belvidera*, I've contriv'd thy Honour:
Truſt to my Faith, and be but Fortune kind
To me, as I'll preſerve that Faith unbroken.

When

When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a Height
Shall gather all the gazing World about thee,
To wonder what ſtrange Virtue plac'd thee here.
But if we ne'er meet more——
*Belv.* Oh! thou unkind one;
Ne'er meet more! have I deſerv'd this from you?
Look on me, tell me, tell me; ſpeak thou dear Deceiver,
Why am I ſeparated from thy Love?
If I am falſe, accuſe me; but if true,
Don't, prithee don't, in Poverty forſake me;
But pity the ſad Heart, that's torn with Parting.
Yet hear me? yet recal me——[*Ex.* Ren. Bed. *and* Belv.
*Jaff.* Oh! my Eyes,
Look not that Way, but turn yourſelves a While
Into my Heart, and be wean'd altogether.
My Friend, where art thou?
*Pier.* Here, my Honour's Brother.
*Jaff.* Is *Belvidera* gone?
*Pier.* *Renault* has led her
Back to her own Apartment; but, by Heav'n,
Thou muſt not ſee her more till our Work's over.
*Jaff.* No?
*Pier.* Not for your Life.
*Jaff.* Oh! *Pierre*, wer't thou but ſhe,
How I would pull thee down into my Heart,
Gaze on thee till my Eye-ſtrings crack'd with Love:
Till all my Sinews with its Fire extended,
Fix'd me upon the Rack of ardent Longing:
Then, ſwelling, ſighing, raging to be bleſt,
Come like a panting Turtle to thy Breaſt;
On thy ſoft Boſom hovering, bill and play,
Confeſs the Cauſe why laſt I fled away;
Own 'twas a Fault, but ſwear to give it o'er,
And never follow falſe Ambition more. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*Enter* Aquilina *and her Maid.*

*Aqui.* TELL him I am gone to Bed; tell him I am not at Home; tell him I've better Company with me, or any thing: Tell him, in ſhort, I will not ſee him, the eternal troubleſome vexatious Fool: He's worſe Company than an ignorant Phyſician —— I'll not be diſturb'd at theſe unſeaſonable Hours.

*Maid.* But, Madam! He's here already, juſt enter'd the Doors.

*Aqui.* Turn him out again, you unneceſſary, uſeleſs, giddy-brain'd Aſs: If he will not be gone, ſet the Houſe a fire, and burn us both: I'd rather meet a Toad in my Diſh, than that old hideous Animal in my Chamber to Night.

*Enter* Antonio.

*Ant. Nacky, Nacky, Nacky* —— how doſt do, *Nacky?* Hurry, durry. I am come, little *Nacky*, paſt Eleven o' Clock, a late Hour; Time in all Conſcience to go to Bed, *Nacky*——*Nacky*, did I ſay? Ay, *Nacky*, *Aquilina*, *lina*, *lina*, *quilina*, *quilina*, *quilina*, *Aquilina*, *Naquilina*, *Naquilina*, *Acky*, *Acky*, *Nacky*, *Nacky*, Queen *Nacky* —— come, let's to Bed ——— you Fubbs, you Pugg you——you little Puſs——Furree, Tuzzy——I am a Senator.

*Aqui.* You are a Fool, I am ſure.

*Ant.* May be ſo too, Sweet heart. Never the worſe Senator for all that. Come, *Nacky*, *Nacky*, let's have a Game at Romp, *Nacky*.

*Aqui.* You would do well, Signor, to be troubleſome here no longer, but leave me to myſelf; be ſober and go Home, Sir.

*Ant.* Home. *Madona!*

*Aqui.* Ay, Home, Sir. Who am I?

*Ant. Madona*, as I take it, you are my —— you are—thou art my little *Nicky*, *Nacky* —— that's all

*Aqui.* I find you are reſolv'd to be troubleſome; and ſo to make ſhort of the Matter in few Words, I hate you, deteſt

deteſt you, loath you, I am weary of you, ſick of you—hang you, you are an old, ſilly, impertinent, impotent, ſollicitous Coxcomb; crazy in your Head, and lazy in your Body, love to be meddling with every thing, and, if you had no Money, you are good for nothing.

*Ant.* Good for nothing! Hurry durry, I'll try that preſently. Sixty one Years old, and good for nothing! that's brave. [*To the Maid*] Come, come, come Mrs. *Fiddle-Faddle*, turn you out for a Seaſon: Go, turn out, I ſay, it is our Will and Pleaſure to be private ſome Moments——out, out, when you are bid too——[*Puts her out and locks the Door*] Good for nothing you ſay?

*Aqui.* Why, what are you good for?

*Ant.* In the firſt Place, Madam, I am old, and conſequently very wiſe, very wiſe, *Madona*, d'ye mark that? In the ſecond Place, take Notice, if you pleaſe, that I am a Senator, and when, I think fit, can make Speeches, *Madona.* Hurry durry, I can make a Speech in the Senate-Houſe now and then——would make your Hair ſtand an End, *Madona.*

*Aqui.* What care I for your Speeches in the Senate-Houſe? If you would but be ſilent here, I ſhould thank you.

*Ant.* Why, I can make Speeches to thee too, my lovely *Madona*; for Example——My cruel Fair one, [*Takes out a Purſe of Gold, and at every Pauſe ſhakes it.* Since it is my Fate, that you ſhould with your Servant angry prove; tho' late at Night——I hope 'tis not too late with this to gain Reception for my Love——There's for thee, my little *Nicky Nacky*——take it, here take it—I ſay take it, or I'll throw it at your Head——how now, Rebel!

*Aqui.* Truly, my illuſtrious Senator, I muſt confeſs your Honour is at preſent moſt profoundly eloquent indeed.

*Ant.* Very well: Come, now let's ſit down and think upon't a little——come, ſit, I ſay——ſit down by me a little, my *Nicky Nacky*, ha——[*Sits down*] Hurry durry——good for nothing——

*Aqui.* No, Sir, if you pleaſe, I can know my Diſtance, and ſtand.

*Ant.*

*Ant.* Stand! How? *Nacky* up and I down! Nay, then let me exclaim with the Poet,

*Shew me a Caſe more pitiful who can,*
*A ſtanding Woman, and a falling Man.*

Hurry durry—not ſit down—ſee this, ye Gods. You won't ſit down?

*Aqui.* No, Sir.

*Ant.* Then look you now, ſuppoſe me a Bull, a *Baſan*-Bull, the Bull of Bulls, or any Bull. Thus up I get, and with my Brows thus bent—I broo, I ſay, I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't ſit down will you—I broo—

[*Bellows like a Bull, and drives her about.*

*Aqui.* Well, Sir, I muſt endure this. [*She ſits down.*] Now your Honour has been a Bull, pray what Beaſt will your Worſhip pleaſe to be next?

*Ant.* Now I'll be a Senator again, and thy Lover, little *Nicky Nacky.* [*He ſits by her.*] Ah! Toad, Toad, Toad, Toad! ſpit in my Face a little, *Nacky*——ſpit in my Face, prithee, ſpit in my Face, never ſo little: Spit but a little bit—ſpit, ſpit, ſpit, ſpit when you are bid, I ſay; do, prithee ſpit—now, now, now, ſpit; what, you won't ſpit, will you? Then I'll be a Dog.

*Aqui.* A Dog, my Lord!

*Ant.* Ay a Dog—and I'll give thee this t'other Purſe to let me be a Dog—— and uſe me like a Dog a little. Hurry durry——I will——here 'tis.—[*Gives the Purſe.*

*Aqui.* Well, with all my Heart. But let me beſeech your Dogſhip to play your Tricks over as faſt as you can, that you may come to ſtinking the ſooner, and be turn'd out of Doors as you deſerve.

*Ant.* Ay, ay—— no matter for that—— that ſhan't move me——[*He gets under the Table.*] Now, bough, waugh waugh, bough waugh—— [*Barks like a Dog.*

*Aqui.* Hold, hold, hold, Sir, I beſeech you: What is't you do? If Curs bite, they muſt be kick'd, Sir: Do you ſee, kick'd thus.

*Ant.* Ay, with all my Heart: Do, kick, kick on, now I am under the Table, kick again——kick harder—— harder yet, bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough——

odd

odd I'll have a Snap at thy Shins—bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough——odd, ſhe kicks bravely——

*Aqui.* Nay, then I'll go another Way to work with you: And I think here's an Inſtrument fit for the Purpoſe! [*Fetches a Whip and a Bell.* What, bite your Miſtreſs, Sirrah! out of Doors you Dog, to Kennel, and be hang'd——bite your Miſtreſs by the Legs, you Rogue—— [*She whips him.*

*Ant.* Nay, prithee *Nacky*, now thou art too loving: Hurry durry, odd, I'll be a Dog no longer.

*Aqui.* Nay, none of your Fawning and Grinning: But be gone, or here's the Diſcipline: What, bite your Miſtreſs by the Leg, you Mungrel! out of Doors——hout, hout, to Kennel, Sirrah! go.

*Ant.* This is very barbarous Uſage, *Nacky*, very barbarous; look you, I will not go——I will not ſtir from the Door, that I reſolve——hurry durry, what, ſhut me out? [*She whips him out.*

*Aqui.* Ay, and if you come here any more to Night, I'll have my Footmen lug you, you Cur: What, bite your poor Miſtreſs *Nacky*, Sirrah!

*Enter Maid.*

*Maid.* Heav'ns! Madam, what's the Matter?

[*He howls at the Door like a Dog.*

*Aqui.* Call my Footmen hither preſently.

*Enter two Footmen.*

*Maid.* They're here already, Madam, all the Houſe is alarm'd with a ſtrange Noiſe, that no body knows what to make of.

*Aqui.* Go, all of you, and turn that troubleſome Beaſt in the next Room out of my Houſe——If I ever ſee him within theſe Walls again, without my Leave for his Admittance, you ſneaking Rogues — I'll have you poiſon'd, all poiſon'd like Rats; every Corner of the Houſe ſhall ſtink of one of you: Go, and learn hereafter to know my Pleaſure. So now for my *Pierre.*

*Thus, when the Godlike Lover is diſpleas'd,*
*We ſacrifice our Fool, and he's appeas'd.* [Exeunt.

SCENE

## SCENE II.

*Enter* Belvidera.

*Belv.* I'm ſacrific'd! I'm ſold! betray'd to Shame!
Inevitable Ruin has inclos'd me!
No ſooner was I to my Bed repair'd,
To weigh and (weeping) ponder my Condition,
But the old hoary Wretch, to whoſe falſe Care
My Peace and Honour was intruſted, came
(Like *Tarquin*) ghaſtly with infernal Luſt.
Oh! thou *Roman Lucrece!* thou could'ſt find Friends to vindicate thy Wrong;
I never had but one, and he's prov'd falſe:
He, that ſhould guard my Virtue, has betray'd it;
Left me! Undone me! Oh that I could hate him!
Where ſhall I go? Oh whither, whither wander!

*Enter* Jaffier.

*Jaff.* Can *Belvidera* want a Reſting-place,
When theſe poor Arms are open to receive her?
Oh! 'tis in vain to ſtruggle with Deſires.
Strong is my Love to thee; for, every Moment
I'm from thy Sight, the Heart within my Boſom
Moans like a tender Infant in its Cradle,
Whoſe Nurſe had left it: Come, and with the Songs
Of gentle Love perſuade it to its Peace.

*Belv.* I fear the ſtubborn Wanderer will not own me,
'Tis grown a Rebel to be rul'd no longer,
Scorns the indulgent Boſom that firſt lull'd it;
And, like a diſobedient Child, diſdains
The ſoft Authority of *Belvidera*.

*Jaff.* There was a Time——

*Belv.* Yes, yes, there was a Time
When *Belvidera*'s Tears, her Cries, and Sorrows,
Were not deſpis'd; when if ſhe chanc'd to ſigh,
Or look but ſad; —— there was indeed a Time
When *Jaffier* would have ta'en her in his Arms,
Eas'd her declining Head upon his Breaſt,
And never left her till he found the Cauſe.
But let her now weep Seas,
Cry till ſhe rend the Earth, ſigh till ſhe burſt

Her Heart aſunder; ſtill he bears it all,
Deaf as the Wind, and as the Rocks unſhaken.
*Jaff.* Have I been deaf? Am I that Rock unmov'd,
Againſt whoſe Root Tears beat, and Sighs are ſent?
In vain have I beheld thy Sorrows calmly!
Witneſs againſt me, Heav'ns, have I done this?
Then bear me in a Whirlwind back again,
And let that angry dear One ne'er forgive me.
Oh! thou too raſhly cenſur'ſt of my Love!
Could'ſt thou but think how I have ſpent this Night,
Dark and alone, no Pillow to my Head,
Reſt in my Eyes, nor Quiet in my Heart!
Thou would'ſt not, *Belvidera*, ſure thou would'ſt not
Talk to me thus, but like a pitying Angel,
Spreading thy Wings, come ſettle on my Breaſt,
And hatch warm Comforts there, e're Sorrows freeze it.
*Belv.* Why then, poor Mourner, in what baleful Corner
Haſt thou been talking with that Witch the Night?
On what cold Stone haſt thou been ſtretch'd along,
Gathering the grumbling Winds about thy Head,
To mix with theirs the Accents of thy Woes?
Oh! now I find the Cauſe my Love forſakes me:
I am no longer fit to bear a Share
In his Concernments: My weak female Virtue
Muſt not be truſted: 'Tis too frail and tender.
*Jaff.* Oh! *Porcia! Porcia!* What a Soul was thine?
*Belv.* That *Porcia* was a Woman; and when *Brutus*,
Big with the Fate of *Rome*, (Heav'n guard thy Safety!)
Conceal'd from her the Labours of his Mind;
She let him ſee her Blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a Spring as noble, and a Heart
Fit to partake his Troubles, as his Love.
Fetch, fetch that Dagger back, the dreadful Dower
Thou gav'ſt laſt Night in parting with me; ſtrike it
Here to my Heart, and, as the Blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as *Cato*'s Daughter's.
*Jaff.* Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,
Unworthy ſo much Virtue: Teach me how
I may deſerve ſuch matchleſs Love as thine,
And ſee with what Attention I'll obey thee.
*Belv.* Do not deſpiſe me: That's the All I aſk.

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* Deſpiſe thee! Hear me——
*Belv.* Oh! thy charming Tongue
Is but too well acquainted with my Weakneſs;
Knows, let it name but Love, my melting Heart
Diſſolves within my Breaſt; till with cloſ'd Eyes
I reel into thy Arms and all's forgotten.
*Jaff.* What ſhall I do?
*Belv.* Tell me, be juſt, and tell me,
Why dwells that buſy Cloud upon thy Face?
Why am I made a Stranger? Why that Sigh,
And I not know the Cauſe? Why when the World
Is wrapp'd in Reſt, why chuſes then my Love
To wander up and down in horrid Darkneſs,
Loathing his Bed, and theſe deſiring Arms?
Why are theſe Eyes blood-ſhot with tedious Watching?
Why ſtarts he now? and looks as if he wiſh'd
His Fate were finiſh'd? Tell me, eaſe my Fear;
Leſt, when we next time meet, I want the Power
To ſearch into the Sickneſs of thy Mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'ſt now.
*Jaff.* Oh! *Belvidera!*
*Belv.* Why was I laſt Night deliver'd to a Villain?
*Jaff.* Ha! a Villain?
*Belv.* Yes, to a Villain! Why at ſuch an Hour
Meets that Aſſembly all made up of Wretches,
That look as Hell had drawn them into League?
Why, I in this Hand, and in that a Dagger,
Was I deliver'd with ſuch dreadful Ceremonies?
" *To you, Sirs, and to your Honour, I bequeath her*
" *And with her this: Whene'er I prove unworthy,*
" *You know the reſt, then ſtrike it to her Heart.*
Oh! why's that *reſt* conceal'd from me? muſt I
Be made the Hoſtage of a helliſh Truſt?
For ſuch I know I am; that's all my Value:
But, by the Love and Loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the Bondage of theſe Slaves;
Strait to the Senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my Fears inform me.
*Jaff.* Is this the *Roman* Virtue! this the Blood
That boaſts its Purity with *Cato*'s Daughter!
Would ſhe have e'er betray'd her *Brutus?*

*Belv.* No:
For *Brutus* truſted her: Wer't thou ſo kind,
What would not *Belvidera* ſuffer for thee?
*Jaff.* I ſhall undo myſelf, and tell thee all.
*Belv.* Look not upon me as I am a Woman,
But as a Bone, thy Wife, thy Friend; who long
Has had Admiſſion to thy Heart, and there
Study'd the Virtues of thy gallant Nature:
Thy Conſtancy, thy Courage, and thy Truth,
Have been my daily Leſſon: I have learn'd 'em.
And, bold as thou, can ſuffer or deſpiſe
The worſt of Fates for thee, and with thee ſhare 'em.
*Jaff.* Oh! thou divineſt Powers! look down and hear
My Prayers! inſtruct me to reward this Virtue!
Yet think a little, e're thou tempt me further;
Think I've a Tale to tell will ſhake thy Nature,
Melt all this boaſted Conſtancy thou talk'ſt of
Into vile Tears and deſpicable Sorrows:
Then if thou ſhould'ſt betray me!
*Belv.* Shall I ſwear?
*Jaff.* No, do not ſwear: I would not violate
Thy tender Nature with ſo rude a Bond:
But as thou hop'ſt to ſee me live my Days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy Breaſt:
I've bound myſelf by all the ſtricteſt Sacraments,
Divine and Human——
*Belv.* Speak!
*Jaff.* To kill thy Father——
*Belv.* My Father!
*Jaff.* Nay, the Throats of the whole Senate
Shall bleed, my *Belvidera:* He, amongſt us,
That ſpares his Father, Brother, or his Friend,
Is damn'd. How rich and beauteous will the Face
Of Ruin look, when theſe wide Streets run Blood?
I, and the glorious Partners of my Fortune,
Shouting, and ſtriding o'er the proſtrate Dead,
Still to new Waſte; whilſt thou, far off in Safety,
Smiling, ſhalt ſee the Wonders of our Daring;
And, when Night comes, with Praiſe and Love receive me.
*Belv.* Oh!

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* Have a Care, and ſhrink not even in Thought:
For if thou doſt——
*Belv.* I know it, thou wilt kill me.
Do, ſtrike thy Sword into this Boſom: Lay me
Dead on the Earth, and then thou wilt be ſafe.
Murder my Father! tho' his cruel Nature
Has perſecuted me to my Undoing;
Driven me to baſeſt Wants; can I behold him,
With Smiles of Vengeance, butcher'd in his Age?
The ſacred Fountain of my Life deſtroy'd?
And can'ſt thou ſhed the Blood that gave me Being?
Nay, be a Traytor too, and ſell thy Country?
Can thy great Heart deſcend ſo vilely low,
Mix with hir'd Slaves, Bravoes, and common Stabbers,
Noſe-ſlitters, Alley-lurking Villains! join
With ſuch a Crew, and take a Ruffian's Wages,
To cut the Throats of Wretches as they ſleep?
*Jaff.* Thou wrong'ſt me, *Belvidera!* I've engag'd
With Men of Souls; fit to reform the Ills
Of all Mankind: There's not a Heart amongſt them
But's ſtout as Death, yet honeſt as the Nature
Of Man firſt made, e're Fraud and Vice were Faſhions.
*Belv.* What's he, to whoſe curs'd Hands laſt Night thou
gav'ſt me?
Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a Story
Would rouze thy Lion-Heart out of its Den,
And make it rage with terrifying Fury.
*Jaff.* Speak on, I charge thee.
*Belv.* Oh! my Love, if e'er
Thy *Belvidera*'s Peace deſerv'd thy Care,
Remove me from this Place: Laſt Night, laſt Night!
*Jaff.* Diſtract me not, but give me all the Truth.
*Belv.* No ſooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the Power of that old Son of Miſchief;
No ſooner was I lain on my ſad Bed;
But that vile Wretch approach'd me, looſe, unbutton'd,
Ready for Violation: Then my Heart
Throbb'd with its Fears: Oh! how I wept and ſigh'd!
And ſhrunk and trembled! wiſh'd in vain for him
That ſhould protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.
*Jaff* Patience! ſweet Heav'n, till I make Vengeance ſure.

*Belv.* He drew the hideous Dagger forth thou gav'ſt him,
And with upbraiding Smiles he ſaid, *Behold it,*
*This is the Pledge of a falſe Huſband's Love:*
And in my Arms then preſs'd, and would have claſp'd me;
But with my Cries I ſcar'd his coward Heart,
'Till he withdrew, and mutter'd Vows to Hell.
Theſe are thy Friends! with theſe thy Life, thy Honour,
Thy Love all ſtak'd, and all will go to Ruin.

*Jaff.* No more; I charge thee keep this Secret cloſe;
Clear up thy Sorrows, look as if thy Wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a Friend,
As no Complaint were made. No more, retire,
Retire, my Life, and doubt not of my Honour;
I'll heal its Failings, and deſerve thy Love.

*Belv.* Oh! ſhould I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In Anger leave me, and return no more.

*Jaff.* Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another Night to purchaſe the Creation.

*Belv.* When ſhall we meet again?

*Jaff.* Anon at Twelve
I'll ſteal myſelf to thy expecting Arms,
Come like a travell'd Dove, and bring thee Peace.

*Belv.* Indeed!

*Jaff.* By all our Loves.

*Belv.* 'Tis hard to part:
But ſure no Falſhood ever look'd ſo fairly.
Farewel, remember Twelve. [*Exit.*

*Jaff.* Let Heav'n forget me,
When I remember not thy Truth, thy Love.
How curs'd is my Condition, toſs'd and juſtled
From every Corner; Fortune's common Fool,
The Jeſt of Rogues, an inſtrumental Aſs
For Villains to lay Loads of Shame upon,
And drive about juſt for their Eaſe and Scorn.

*Enter* Pierre.

*Pier. Jaffier!*

*Jaff.* Who calls?

*Pier.* A Friend, that could have wiſh'd
T'have found thee otherwiſe employ'd: What hunt
A Wife on the dull Soil! ſure a ſtaunch Huſband
Of all Hounds is the dulleſt. Wilt thou never,

Never

Never be wean'd from Caudles and Confections?
What feminine Tale haſt thou been liſt'ning to,
Of unair'd Shirts, Catarrhs and Tooth-ach, got
By thin-ſol'd Shoes? Damnation! that a Fellow,
Choſen to be a Sharer in the Deſtruction
Of a whole People, ſhould ſneak thus in Corners,
To eaſe his fulſome Luſts, and fool his Mind.

*Jaff.* May not a Man then trifle out an Hour
With a kind Woman, and not wrong his Calling!

*Pier.* Not in a Cauſe like ours.

*Jaff.* Then, Friend, our Cauſe
Is in a damn'd Condition: For I'll tell thee,
That Canker-worm, call'd *Leachery*, has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely: Would'ſt thou think it; *Renault*
(That mortify'd old wither'd Winter-Rogue)
Loves ſimple Fornication like a Prieſt;
I found him out for watering at my Wife;
He viſited her laſt Night like a kind Guardian:
Faith, ſhe has ſome Temptation, that's the Truth on't.

*Pier.* He durſt not wrong his Truſt.

*Jaff.* 'Twas ſomething late tho'
To take the Freedom of a Lady's Chamber.

*Pier.* Was ſhe in Bed?

*Jaff.* Yes, Faith, in Virgin-ſheets
White as her Boſom, *Pierre*, diſh'd neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker Appetite to taſte.
Oh! how the old Fox ſtunk I warrant thee,
When the rank Fit was on him.

*Pier.* Patience, guide me:
He us'd no Violence!

*Jaff.* No, no, out on't, Violence!
Play'd with her Neck! bruſh'd her with his grey Beard,
Struggl'd and towz'd, tickl'd her till ſhe ſqueak'd a little,
May be, or ſo——but not a Jot of Violence——

*Pier.* Damn him.

*Jaff.* Ay, ſo ſay I: But, huſh, no more on't;
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myſelf no Monſter yet: Tho' no Man knows
What Fate he's born to: Sure 'tis near the Hour
We all ſhould meet for our concluding Orders:
Will the Ambaſſador be here in Perſon?

*Pier.*

*Pier.* No: he has ſent Commiſſion to that Villain *Renault*,
To give the executing Charge:
I'd have thee be a Man, if poſſible,
And keep thy Temper; for a brave Revenge
Ne'er comes too late.

*Jaff.* Fear not, I am cool as Patience:
Had he compleated my Diſhonour, rather
Than hazard the Succeſs our Hopes are ripe for,
I'd bear it all with mortifying Virtue.

*Pier.* He's yonder, coming this Way through the Hall;
His Thoughts ſeem full.

*Jaff.* Prithee retire and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to ſome Trial;
See how his rotten Part will bear the Touching.

*Pier.* Be careful then. [*Exit.*

*Jaff.* Nay, never doubt, but truſt me.
What, be a Devil! take a damning Oath
For ſhedding native Blood! Can there be a Sin
In merciful Repentance? Oh! this Villain!

*Enter* Renault.

*Ren.* Perverſe and peeviſh: What a Slave is Man
To let his itching Fleſh thus get the better of him?
Diſpatch the Tool her Huſband——that were well.
Who's there?

*Jaff.* A Man.

*Ren.* My Friend, my near Ally.
The Hoſtage of your Faith, my beauteous Charge, is very well.

*Jaff.* Sir, are you ſure of that?
Stands ſhe in perfect Health? Beats her Pulſe ever?
Neither too hot nor cold?

*Ren.* What means that Queſtion?

*Jaff.* Oh! Women have fantaſtick Conſtitutions,
Inconſtant as their Wiſhes, always wavering,
And never fix'd: Was it not boldly done
Even at firſt Sight to truſt the Thing I lov'd
(A tempting Treaſure too) with Youth ſo fierce
And vigorous as thine? But thou art honeſt.

*Ren.* Who dare accuſe me?

*Jaff.* Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy Virtue, I have try'd it, and declare,

Were

Were I to chuſe a Guardian of my Honour,
I'd put it in thy Keeping: For I know thee.
*Ren.* Know me!
*Jaff.* Ay, know thee: There's no Falſhood in thee,
Thou look'ſt juſt as thou art: Let us embrace.
Now would'ſt thou cut my Throat, or I cut thine?
*Ren.* You dare not do't.
*Jaff.* You lye, Sir.
*Ren.* How!
*Jaff.* No more.
'Tis a baſe World, and muſt reform, that's all.
*Enter* Spinoſa, Theodore, Eliot, Revellido, Durand, Bramveil, *and the reſt of the Conſpirators.*
*Ren. Spinoſa, Theodore!*
*Spin.* The ſame.
*Ren.* You are welcome.
*Spin.* You are trembling, Sir.
*Ren.* 'Tis a cold Night indeed; I am aged,
Full of Decay, and natural Infirmities: [Pier. *re-enters:*
We ſhall be warm, my Friends, I hope To-morrow.
*Pier.* 'Twas not well done; thou ſhould'ſt have ſtroak'd him,
And not have gall'd him.
*Jaff.* Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heav'n! where am I? beſet with curſed Friends,
That wait to damn me! What a Devil's Man,
When he forgets his Nature——huſh, my Heart.
*Ren.* My Friends, 'tis late: Are we aſſembled all?
Where's *Theodore?*
*Theo.* At hand.
*Ren. Spinoſa.*
*Spin.* Here.
*Ren. Bramveil.*
*Bram.* I am ready.
*Ren. Durand* and *Brabe.*
*Dur.* Command us;
We are both prepar'd.
*Ren. Mezzana, Revellido,*
*Vernon, Retroſi:* Oh! you're Men I find,
Fit to behold your Fate, and meet her Summons:
To-morrow's riſing Sun muſt ſee you all
Deck'd in your Honours; are the Soldiers ready.
*All.* All, all.

*Ren.*

*Ren.* You, *Durand*, with your Thouſand muſt poſſeſs
St. *Mark*'s; you, Captain, know your Charge already;
'Tis to ſecure the Ducal Palace: You,
*Brabe*, with a Hundred more muſt gain the *Secque*;
With the like Number, *Bramveil*, to the *Procurale*.
Be all this done with the leaſt Tumult poſſible,
'Till in each Place you poſt ſufficient Guards:
Then ſheathe your Swords in every Breaſt you meet.

*Jaff.* Oh! reverend Cruelty! damn'd bloody Villain!

*Ren.* During this Execution, *Durand*, you
Muſt in the Midſt keep your Battalia faſt;
And, *Theodore*, be ſure to plant the Cannon
That may command the Streets; whilſt *Revellido*,
*Mazzano*, *Ternon*, and *Retroſi* guard you.
This done, we'll give the general Alarm,
Apply Petards, and force the Arſ'nal Gates;
Then fire the City round in ſeveral Places,
Or with our Cannon (if it dare reſiſt)
Batter to Ruin. But above all I charge you
Shed Blood enough, ſpare neither Sex nor Age,
Name nor Condition; if there live a Senator
After To-morrow, though the dulleſt Rogue
That e'er ſaid nothing, we have loſt our Ends:
If poſſible, let's kill the very Name
Of Senator, and bury it in Blood.

*Jaff.* Mercileſs, horrid Slave,—Ay, Blood enough!
Shed Blood enough, old *Renault!* how thou charm'ſt me!

*Ren.* But one thing more, and then Farewel, till Fate
Join us again, or ſeparate us ever:
Firſt let's embrace. Heav'n knows who next ſhall thus
Wing ye together: But let's us all remember
We wear no common Cauſe upon our Swords:
Let each Man think that on his ſingle Virtue
Depends the Good and Fame of all the reſt;
Eternal Honour, or perpetual Infamy.
Let us remember through what dreadful Hazards
Propitious Fortune hitherto hath led us:
How often on the Brink of ſome Diſcovery
Have we ſtood tottering, yet ſtill kept our Ground
So well, that the buſieſt Searchers ne'er could follow
Thoſe ſubtle Tracks which puzzled all Suſpicion?
You droop, Sir.

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* No: with moſt profound Attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy Virtue.
*Ren.* Tho' there be yet few Hours 'twixt them and Ruin,
Are not the Senate lull'd in full Security,
Quiet and ſatisfy'd, as Fools are always?
Never did ſo profound Repoſe fore-run
Calamity ſo great: Nay, our good Fortune
Has blinded the moſt piercing of Mankind,
Strengthen'd the fearfulleſt, charm'd the moſt ſuſpectful,
Confounded the moſt ſubtle: For we live,
We live, my Friends, and quickly ſhall our Life
Prove fatal to theſe Tyrants: Let's conſider,
That we deſtroy Oppreſſion, Avarice,
A People nurs'd up equally with Vices
And loathſome Luſts, which Nature moſt abhors,
And ſuch as without Shame ſhe cannot ſuffer.
*Jaff.* Oh! *Belvidera*, take me to thy Arms,
And ſhew me where's my Peace, for I have loſt it. [*Exit.*
*Ren.* Without the leaſt Remorſe then let's reſolve
With Fire and Sword t'exterminate theſe Tyrants;
And when we ſhall behold theſe curs'd Tribunals
Stain'd by the Tears and Sufferings of the Innocent,
Burning with Flames rather from Heav'n than ours,
The raging, furious, and unpitying Soldier
Pulling his reeking Dagger from the Boſoms
Of gaſping Wretches; Death in every Quarter,
With all that ſad Diſorder can produce,
To make a Spectacle of Horrour; then,
Then let us call to mind, my deareſt Friends,
That there is nothing pure upon the Earth;
That the moſt valu'd Things have moſt Alloys,
And that in Change of all thoſe vile Enormities,
Under whoſe Weight this wretched Country labours,
The Means are only in our Hands to crown them.
*Pier.* And may thoſe Powers above, that are propitious
To gallant Minds, record this Cauſe and bleſs it.
*Ren.* Thus happy, thus ſecure of all we wiſh for,
Should there, my Friends, be found amongſt us one
Falſe to this glorious Enterprize, what Fate,
What Vengeance were enough for ſuch a Villain?
*Eli.* Death here, without Repentance Hell hereafter.

*Ren.*

*Ren.* Let that be my Lot, if, as here I ſtand,
Liſted by Fate amongſt her darling Sons,
Tho' I had one only Brother, dear by all
The ſtricteſt Ties of Nature; tho' one Hour
Had given us Birth, one Fortune fed our Wants,
One only Love, and that but of each other,
Still fill'd our Minds: Could I have ſuch a Friend
Join'd in this Cauſe, and had but Ground to fear
He meant foul Play; may this right Hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future Peace,
And ſtab him to the Heart before you. Who?
Who would do leſs? would'ſt thou not, *Pierre*, the ſame?

*Pier.* You've ſingled me, Sir, out for this hard Queſtion,
As if 'twere ſtarted only for my Sake:
Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my Boſom,
Search it with all your Swords: Am I a Traytor?

*Ren.* No: But I fear your late commended Friend
Is little leſs: Come, Sirs, 'tis now no Time
To trifle with our Safety. Where's this *Jaffier?*

*Spin.* He left the Room juſt now in ſtrange Diſorder.

*Ren.* Nay, there is Danger in him: I obſerv'd him,
During the Time I took for Explanation,
He was tranſported from moſt deep Attention
To a Confuſion which he could not ſmother.
His Looks grew full of Sadneſs and Surprize,
All which betray'd a wavering Spirit in him,
That labour'd with Reluctancy and Sorrow.
What's requiſite for Safety muſt be done
With ſpeedy Execution, he remains
Yet in our Power: I for my own Part wear
A Dagger———

*Pier.* Well.

*Ren.* And I could wiſh it———

*Pier.* Where?

*Ren.* Bury'd in his Heart.

*Pier.* Away; we're yet all Friends;
No more of this, 'twill breed ill Blood amongſt us.

*Spin.* Let us all draw our Swords and ſearch the Houſe,
Pull him from the dark Hole where he ſits brooding
O'er his cold Fears, and each Man kill his Share of him.

*Pier.* Who talks of killing, who's he'll ſhed the Blood,
That's

That's dear to me? Is't you? or you? or you, Sir?
What, not one ſpeak? How you ſtand gaping all
On your grave Oracle, your wooden God there!
Yet not a Word? Then, Sir, I'll tell y' a Secret;
Suſpicion's but at beſt a Coward's Virtue. [*To* Ren.

*Ren.* A Coward!—— [*Handles his Sword.*

*Pier.* Put up thy Sword, old Man,
Thy Hand ſhakes at it; come's let's heal this Breach;
I am too hot: We yet may all live Friends.

*Spin.* Till we are ſafe, our Friendſhip cannot be ſo.

*Pier.* Again! Who's that?

*Spin.* 'Twas I.

*Theod.* And I.

*Rev.* And I.

*Eli.* And all.

*Ren.* Who are on my Side?

*Spin.* Every honeſt Sword.
Let's die like Men, and not be ſold like Slaves.

*Pier.* One ſuch Word more, by Heav'n I'll to the Senate
And hang ye all like Dogs, in Cluſters.
Why peep your Coward Swords half out their Shells?
Why do you not all brandiſh them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

*Ren.* Go to the Senate and betray us! haſte,
Secure thy wretched Life; we fear to die
Leſs than thou dar'ſt be honeſt.

*Pier.* That's rank Falſhood;
Fear'ſt not thou Death? Fie, there's a knaviſh Itch
In that ſalt Blood, an utter Foe to Smarting.
Had *Jaffier*'s Wife prov'd kind, he'd ſtill been true.
Faugh——how that ſtinks?
Thou die! thou kill my Friend, or thou, or thou,
With that lean, withered Face!
Away; diſperſe all to your ſeveral Charges,
And meet To-morrow where your Honour calls you;
I'll bring that Man, whoſe Blood you ſo much thirſt for,
And you ſhall ſee him venture for you fairly——
Hence, hence, I ſay. [*Exit* Renault *angrily.*

*Spin.* I fear we have been to blame,
And done too much.

*Theod.* 'Twas too far urg'd againſt the Man you lov'd.

*Rev.* Here take our Swords, and cruſh them with your (Feet.
*Spin* Forgive us, gallant Friend.
*Pier.* Nay, now you've found
The Way to melt, and caſt me as you will:
I'll fetch this Friend, and give him to your Mercy:
Nay, he ſhall die, if you will take him from me.
For your Repoſe, I'll quit my Heart's beſt Jewel;
But would not have him torn away by Villains,
A ſpiteful Villainy.
*Spin.* No, may you both
For ever live, and fill the World with Fame.
*Pier.* Now ye're too kind. Whence 'roſe all this Diſcord?
Oh! What a dangerous Precipice have we 'ſcap'd!
How near a Fall was all we'd long been building!
What an eternal Blot had ſtain'd our Glories,
If one, the braveſt and the beſt of Men,
Had fall'n a Sacrifice to raſh Suſpicion,
Butcher'd by thoſe whoſe Cauſe he came to cheriſh!
Oh! could you know him all as I have known him,
How good he is, how juſt, how true, how brave,
You would not leave this Place till you had ſeen him;
Humbled yourſelves before him, kiſs'd his Feet,
And gain'd Remiſſion for the worſt of Follies.

*Come but To-morrow, all your Doubts ſhall end,*
*And to your Loves me better recommend,*
*That I've preſerv'd your Fame, and ſav'd my Friend.*

[Exeunt.

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## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Enter* Jaffier *and* Belvidera.

*Jaff.* WHere doſt thou lead me? Every Step I move
Methinks I tread upon ſome mangled Limb
Of a rack'd Friend: O my charming Ruin!
Where are we wandering?
*Belv.* To eternal Honour;
You do a Deed ſhall chronicle thy Name,
Among the glorious Legends of thoſe few,

That

That have ſav'd ſinking Nations: Thy Renown
Shall be the future Song of all the Virgins,
Who by thy Piety have been preſerv'd
From horrid Violation: Every Street
Shall be adorn'd with Statues to thy Honour,
And at thy Feet this great Inſcription written,
*Remember him that propp'd the Fall of* Venice.
*Jaff.* Rather, remember him, who, after all
The ſacred Bonds of Oaths and holier Friendſhip,
In fond Compaſſion to a Woman's Tears,
Forgot his Manhood. Virtue, Truth, and Honour,
To ſacrifice the Boſom that reliev'd him.
Why wilt thou damn me?
*Belv.* Oh! inconſtant Man!
How will you promiſe! how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my Bondage,
Tell all thy Friends how dang'rouſly thou lov'ſt me,
And let thy Dagger do its bloody Office.
Oh! that kind Dagger, *Jaffier*, how 'twill look,
Struck thro' my Heart, drench'd in my Blood to th' Hilt?
Whilſt theſe poor dying Eyes ſhall with their Tears
No more torment thee, then thou wilt be free:
Or, if thou think'ſt it nobler, let me live,
Till I'm a Victim to the hateful Luſt
Of that infernal Devil, that old Fiend,
That's damn'd himſelf, and would undo Mankind.
Laſt Night, my Love!
*Jaff.* Name it not again:
It ſhews a beaſtly Image to my Fancy,
Will wake me into Madneſs. Oh! the Villain!
That durſt approach ſuch Purity as thine,
On Terms ſo vile: Deſtruction, ſwift Deſtruction,
Fall on my coward Head, and make my Name
The common Scorn of Fools, if I forgive him:
If I forgive him! if I not revenge
With utmoſt Rage, and moſt unſtaying Fury,
Thy Suffering, thou dear Darling of my Life.
*Belv.* Delay no longer then, but to the Senate,
And tell the diſmall'ſt Story ever utter'd:
Tell 'em what Bloodſhed, Rapines, Deſolations,
Have been prepar'd; how near's the Fatal Hour:

Save thy poor Country, ſave the reverend Blood
Of all its Nobles, which To-morrow's Dawn
Muſt elſe ſee ſhed: Save the poor tender Lives
Of all thoſe little Infants, which the Swords
Of Murderers are whetting for this Moment:
Think thou already hear'ſt their dying Screams,
Think that thou ſee'ſt their ſad diſtracted Mothers
Kneeling before thy Feet, and begging Pity,
With torn diſhevel'd Hair, and ſtreaming Eyes,
Their naked mangled Breaſts beſmear'd with Blood;
And even the Milk, with which their fondled Babes
Softly they huſh'd, dropping in Anguiſh from 'em:
Think thou ſeeſt this, and then conſult thy Heart.

*Jaff.* Oh!

*Belv.* Think too, if you loſe this preſent Minute,
What Miſeries the next Day brings upon thee.
Imagine all the Horrors of that Night,
Murder and Rapine, Waſte and Deſolation,
Confus'dly raging: Think what then may prove
My Lot; the Raviſher may then come ſafe,
And 'midſt the Terror of the publick Ruin
Do a damn'd Deed; perhaps may lay a Train
To catch thy Life: Then where will be Revenge,
The dear Revenge that's due to ſuch a Wrong?

*Jaff.* By all Heav'n's Powers, prophetick Truth dwells in thee,
For every Word thou ſpeak'ſt ſtrikes thro' my Heart,
Like a new Light, and ſhews it how't has wander'd.
Juſt what th'haſt made me, take me, *Belvidera*,
And lead me to the Place where I'm to ſay
This bitter Leſſon; where I muſt betray
My Truth, my Virtue, Conſtancy, and Friends:
Muſt I betray my Friend? Ah! take me quickly,
Secure me well before that Thought's renew'd;
If I relapſe once more, all's loſt for ever.

*Belv.* Haſt thou a Friend more dear than *Belvidera?*

*Jaff.* No; thou art my Soul itſelf, Wealth, Friendſhip, Honour;
All preſent Joys, and Earneſt of all future,
Are ſumm'd in thee: Methinks when in thy Arms,
Thus leaning on thy Breaſt, one Minute's more

Than

Than a long thouſand Years of vulgar Hours.
Why was ſuch Happineſs not given me pure?
Why daſh'd with cruel Wrongs, and bitter Warnings?
Come, lead me forward now like a tame Lamb
To Sacrifice. Thus, in his fatal Garlands
Deck'd fine and pleas'd, the Wanton ſkips and plays,

*Trots by th' enticing flatt'ring Prieſteſs' Side*
*And, much tranſported with its little Pride,*
*Forgets his dear Companions of the Plain;*
*'Till, by her bound, he's on the Altar lain,*
*Yet then too hardly bleats, ſuch Pleaſure's in the Pain.*

*Enter Officer and ſix Guards.*

*Offi.* Stand, who goes there?
*Belv.* Friends.
*Jaff.* Friends, *Belvidera?* hide me from my Friends;
By Heav'n, I'd rather ſee the Face of Hell,
Than meet the Man I love.
*Offi.* But what Friends are you?
*Jaff.* Friends to the Senate and the State of *Venice.*
*Offi.* My Orders are to ſeize on all I find
At this late Hour, and bring 'em to the Council,
Who now are ſitting.
*Jaff.* Sir, you ſhall be obey'd.
Hold, Brute, ſtand off, none of your Paws upon me:
Now the Lot's caſt, and Fate do what thou wilt.
[*Exeunt guarded.*

## SCENE II. *The Senate-houſe.*

*Where appear ſitting the Duke of* Venice, Priuli, Antonio, *and eight other Senators.*

*Duke. Antony, Priuli,* Senators of *Venice,*
Speak, why are we aſſembled here this Night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The State of *Venice* Honour, or its Safety?
*Pri.* Could Words expreſs the Story I've to tell you,
Fathers, theſe Tears were uſeleſs, theſe ſad Tears
That fell from my old Eyes; but there is Cauſe
We all ſhould weep, tear off theſe purple Robes,
And wrap ourſelves in Sackcloth, ſitting down

On the ſad Earth, and cry aloud to Heav'n:
Heav'n knows if yet there be an Hour to come,
E're *Venice* be no more.

*All Sen.* How!

*Pri.* Nay, we ſtand
Upon the very Brink of gaping Ruin.
Within this City's form'd a dark Conſpiracy,
To maſſacre us all, our Wives and Children,
Kindred and Friends, our Palaces and Temples
To lay in Aſhes: Nay, the Hour too fix'd;
The Sword's, for aught I know, drawn e'en this Moment,
And the wild Waſte begun. From unknown Hands
I had this Warning: But, if we are Men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do ſomething
That may inform the World in After-ages,
Our Virtue was not ruin'd, tho' we were. [*A Noiſe without.*
Room, Room, make Room for ſome Priſoners——

*Sen.* Let's raiſe the City.

*Enter Officer and Guards.*

*Pri.* Speak there, What Diſturbance?

*Offi.* Two Priſoners have the Guard ſeiz'd in the Streets,
Who ſay, they come to inform this reverend Senate
About the preſent Danger.

*Enter* Jaffier *and* Belvidera *guarded.*

*All.* Give 'em Entrance—— Well, who are you?

*Jaff.* A Villain.

*Ant.* Short and pithy:
The Man ſpeaks well.

*Jaff.* Would every Man, that hears me,
Would deal ſo honeſtly, and own his Title.

*Duke.* 'Tis rumour'd, that a Plot has been contriv'd
Againſt this State; that you have a Share in't too.
If you are a Villain, to redeem your Honour,
Unfold the Truth, and be reſtor'd with Mercy.

*Jaff.* Think not that I to ſave my Life come hither:
I know its Value better; but in Pity
To all thoſe Wretches, whoſe unhappy Dooms
Are fix'd and ſeal'd. You ſee me here before you,
The ſworn and covenanted Foe of *Venice:*
But uſe me as my Dealings may deſerve,
And I may prove a Friend.

*Duke.*

*Duke.* The Slave capitulates:
Give him the Tortures.
*Jaff.* That you dare not do,
Your Fears won't let you, nor the longing Itch
To hear a Story which you dread the Truth of:
Truth, which the Fear of Smart ſhall ne'er get from me.
Cowards are ſcar'd with Threat'nings; Boys are whipt
Into Confeſſions: But a ſteady Mind
Acts of itſelf, ne'er aſks the Body Counſel.
Give him the Tortures! Name but ſuch a thing
Again, by Heav'n I'll ſhut theſe Lips for ever.
Not all your Rocks, your Engines, or your Wheels,
Shall force a Groan away——that you may gueſs at.
*Ant.* A bloody-minded Fellow I'll warrant;
A damn'd bloody-minded Fellow.
*Duke.* Name your Conditions.
*Jaff.* For myſelf full Pardon,
Beſides the Life of Two and Twenty Friends.
[*Delivers a Liſt.*
Whoſe Names are here enroll'd: Nay, let their Crimes
Be ne'er ſo monſtrous, I muſt have the Oaths
And ſacred Promiſe of this reverend Council,
That in a full Aſſembly of the Senate
The Thing I aſk be ratify'd. Swear this
And I'll unfold the Secret of your Danger.
*All.* We'll ſwear.
*Duke.* Propoſe the Oath.
*Jaff.* By all the Hopes
You have of Peace and Happineſs hereafter,
Swear.
*All.* We all ſwear.
*Jaff.* To grant me what I have aſk'd,
Ye ſwear?
*All.* We ſwear.
*Jaff.* And, as ye keep the Oath,
May you and your Poſterity be bleſs'd,
Or curs'd for ever.
*All.* Elſe be curs'd for ever.
*Jaff.* Then here's the Liſt, and with't the full Diſcloſe
Of all that threatens you, [*Delivers another Paper.*
Now, Fate, thou haſt caught me.

*Ant.*

*Ant.* Why, what a dreadful Catalogue of Cut-throats is here! I'll warrant you not one of theſe Fellows but has a Face like a Lion. I dare not ſo much as read their Names over.

*Duke.* Give Order that all diligent Search be made
To ſeize theſe Men; their Characters are publick.
The Paper intimates their Rendezvous
To be at the Houſe of the fam'd *Grecian* Courtezan,
Call'd *Aquilina*, ſee the Place ſecur'd.

*Ant.* What? my *Nicky Nacky!* Hurry, durry! *Nicky Nacky* in the Plot —— I'll make a Speech. Moſt noble Senators,
What headlong Apprehenſions drive you on,
Right, noble, wiſe, and truly ſolid Senators,
To violate the Laws and Rights of Nations?
The Lady is a Lady of Renown:
'Tis true, ſhe holds a Houſe of fair Reception,
And, tho' I ſay't myſelf, as many more
Can ſay as well as I.

2 *Sen.* My Lord, long Speeches
Are frivolous here, when Dangers are ſo near us:
We all well know your Intereſt in that Lady;
The World talks loud on't.

*Ant.* Verily I have done;
I ſay no more.

*Duke.* But, ſince he has declar'd
Himſelf concern'd, pray, Captain, take great Caution
To treat the fair One as becomes her Character,
And let her Bed-chamber be ſearch'd with Decency.
You, *Jaffier*, muſt with Patience bear till Morning
To be our Priſoner.

*Jaff.* Would the Chains of Death
Had bound me ſafe e're I had known this Minute.
I've done a Deed will make my Story hereafter
Quoted in Competition with all ill Ones:
The Story of my Wickedneſs ſhall run
Down thro' the low Traditions of the Vulgar,
And Boys be taught to tell the Tale of *Jaffier*.

*Duke.* Captain, withdraw your Priſoner.

*Jaff.* Sir, if poſſible, (me;
Lead me where my own Thoughts themſelves may loſe
Where

Where I may doze out what I've left of Life,
Forget myſelf, and this Day's Guilt and Falſhood.
Cruel Remembrance, how ſhall I appeaſe thee!
[*Ex. guarded.* *Noiſe without.*
More Traytors; Room, Room, make Room there.
*Duke.* How's this, Guards?
Where are our Guards? Shut up the Gates, the Treaſon's
Already at our Doors *Enter Officer.*
*Off.* My Lords, more Traytors,
Seiz'd in the very Act of Conſultation:
Furniſh'd with Arms and Inſtruments of Miſchief.
Bring in the Priſoners.
*Enter* Pierre, Renault, Theodore, Eliot, Revellido, *and other Conſpirators in Fetters.*
*Pier.* You, my Lords and Fathers
(As you are pleas'd to call yourſelves) of *Venice*;
If you ſit here to guide the Courſe of Juſtice,
Why theſe diſgraceful Chains upon the Limbs
That have ſo often labour'd in your Service?
Are theſe the Wreaths of Triumph ye beſtow
On thoſe that bring you Conqueſts Home, and Honours?
*Duke.* Go on, you ſhall be heard, Sir.
*Ant.* And be hang'd too, I hope.
*Pier.* Are theſe the Trophies I've deſerv'd for fighting
Your Battles with confederated Powers?
When Winds and Seas conſpir'd to overthrow you,
And brought the Fleets of *Spain* to your own Harbours;
When you, great Duke, ſhrunk trembling in your Palace,
And ſaw your Wife, the' *Adriatick*, plough'd,
Like a lew'd Whore, by bolder Prows than yours,
Stepp'd not I forth, and taught your looſe *Venetians*
The Task of Honour, and the Way of Greatneſs?
Rais'd you from your capitulating Fears,
To ſtipulate the Terms of ſu'd-for Peace?
And this my Recompence! If I'm a Traytor,
Produce my Charge; to ſhew the Wretch that's baſe
And brave enough, or tell me I'm a Traytor. [enough,
*Duke.* Know you one *Jaffier!* [*All the Conſp. murmur.*
*Pier.* Yes, and know his Virtue,
His Juſtice, Truth, his general Worth, and Sufferings
From a hard Father, taught me firſt to love him.
*Enter*

*Enter* Jaffier *guarded.*

*Duke.* See him brought forth.

*Pier.* My Friend too bound! nay then
Our Fate has conquer'd us, and we fall.
Why droops the Man whoſe Welfare's ſo much mine,
They're but one thing? Theſe reverend Tyrants, *Jaffier*,
Call us all Traytors: Art thou one, my Brother?

*Jaff.* To thee I am the falſeſt, verieſt Slave
That e'er betray'd a generous, truſting Friend,
And gave up Honour to be ſure of Ruin:
All our fair Hopes, which Morning was to have crown'd,
Has this curs'd Tongue o'erthrown.

*Pier.* So, then all's over:
*Venice* has loſt her Freedom, I my Life;
No more; farewel.

*Duke.* Say; will you make Confeſſion
Of your vile Deeds, and truſt the Senate's Mercy?

*Pier.* Curs'd be your Senate: Curs'd you Conſtitution:
The Curſe of growing Factions and Diviſion
Still vex your Councils, ſhake your publick Safety,
And make the Robes of Government, you wear,
Hateful to you, as theſe baſe Chains to me.

*Duke.* Pardon, or Death!

*Pier.* Death! honourable Death!

*Ren.* Death's the beſt thing we ask, or you can give.

*All Conſp.* No ſhameful Bonds, but honourable Death.

*Duke.* Break up the Council: Captain, guard your Priſoners.
*Jaffier*, you're free, but theſe muſt wait for Judgment.
[*Ex. all the Senators.*

*Pier.* Come, where's my Dungeon? Lead me to my (Straw:
It will not be the firſt Time I have lodg'd hard
To do the Senate Service.

*Jaff.* Hold one Moment.

*Pier.* Who's he diſputes the Judgment of the Senate?
Preſumptuous Rebel—on— [*Strikes* Jaff.

*Jaff.* By Heav'n, you ſtir not.
I muſt be heard, I muſt have Leave to ſpeak:
Thou haſt diſgrac'd me, *Pierre*, by a vile Blow:
Had not a Dagger done thee nobler Juſtice?
But uſe me as thou wilt, thou canſt not wrong me,
For

For I am fallen beneath the baſeſt Injuries;
Yet look upon me with an Eye of Mercy,
With Pity and with Charity behold me;
Shut not thy Heart againſt a Friend's Repentance;
But, as there dwells a godlike Nature in thee,
Liſten with Mildneſs to my Supplications.

*Pier.* What whining Monk art thou? what holy Cheat
That would'ſt incroach upon my credulous Ears,
And cant'ſt thus vilely? hence: I know thee not;
Diſſemble and be naſty: Leave, Hypocrite.

*Jaff.* Not know me, *Pierre!*

*Pier.* No, know thee not; what art thou?

*Jaff. Jaffier*, thy Friend, thy once lov'd, valu'd Friend!
Tho' now deſerv'dly ſcorn'd, and us'd moſt hardly.

*Pier.* Thou *Jaffier!* thou my once lov'd, valu'd Friend!
By Heav'ns thou ly'ſt; the Man ſo call'd, my Friend,
Was generous, honeſt, faithful, juſt, and valiant,
Noble in Mind, and in his Perſon lovely,
Dear to my Eyes, and tender to my Heart:
But thou a wretched, baſe, falſe, worthleſs Coward,
Poor even in Soul, and loathſome in thy Aſpect:
All Eyes muſt ſhun thee, and all Hearts deteſt thee,
Prithee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like ſomething baneful, that my Nature's chill'd at.

*Jaff.* I have not wrong'd thee, by theſe Tears I have not,
But ſtill am honeſt, true, and, hope too, valiant;
My Mind ſtill full of thee; therefore ſtill noble.
Let not thy Eyes then ſhun me, nor thy Heart
Deteſt me utterly: Oh! look upon me,
Look back and ſee my ſad, ſincere Submiſſion!
How my Heart ſwells, as even 'twould burſt my Boſom;
Fond of its Goal, and labouring to be at thee;
What ſhall I do? what ſay to make thee hear me?

*Pier.* Haſt not thou wrong'd me? dar'ſt thou call thyſelf
That once lov'd, valu'd Friend of mine,
And ſwear thou haſt not wrong'd me? Whence theſe Chains?
Whence the vile Death, which I may meet this Moment;
Whence this Diſhonour, but from thee, thou falſe one?

*Jaff.*——All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done Asking.

*Pier.* What's that?

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* To take thy Life on ſuch Conditions
The Council have propos'd: Thou and thy Friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.
*Pier.* Life! ask my Life! confeſs! record myſelf
A Villain for the Privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this curſed City
A diſcontented and repining Spirit,
Burdenſome to itſelf, a few Years longer,
To loſe it, may be, at laſt in a lewd Quarrel
For ſome new Friend, treacherous and falſe as thou art!
No, this vile World and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better Terms than now,
When only Men like thee are fit to live in't.
*Jaff.* By all that's juſt——
*Pier.* Swear by ſome other Powers,
For thou haſt broke that ſacred Oath too lately.
*Jaff.* Then, by that Hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,
Till to thyſelf at leaſt thou'rt reconcil'd,
However thy Reſentment deal with me.
*Pier.* Not leave me!
*Jaff.* No; thou ſhalt not force me from thee:
Uſe me reproachfully, and like a Slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap Wrongs on Wrongs
On my poor Head; I'll bear it all with Patience,
Shall weary out thy moſt unfriendly Cruelty:
Lie at thy Feet and kiſs 'em, tho' they ſpurn me,
Till, wounded by my Sufferings, thou relent,
And raiſe me to thy Arms with dear Forgiveneſs.
*Pier.* Art thou not——
*Jaff.* What?
*Pier.* A Traytor?
*Jaff.* Yes.
*Pier.* A Villain?
*Jaff.* Granted.
*Pier.* A Coward, a moſt ſcandalous Coward,
Spiritleſs, void of Honour, one who has ſold
Thy everlaſting Fame for ſhameleſs Life?
*Jaff.* All, all, and more, much more: My Faults are numberleſs.
*Pier.* And would'ſt thou have me live on Terms like thine?
Baſe as thou'rt falſe——

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* No; 'tis to me that's granted:
The Safety of thy Life was all I aim'd at,
In Recompence for Faith and Truſt ſo broken.
*Pier.* I ſcorn it more, becauſe preſerv'd by thee:
And as when firſt my fooliſh Heart took Pity
On thy Misfortunes, ſought thee in thy Miſeries,
Reliev'd thy Wants, and rais'd thee from thy State
Of Wretchedneſs, in which thy Fate had plung'd thee;
To rank thee in my Liſt of noble Friends;
All I receiv'd, in Surety for thy Truth,
Were unregarded Oaths; and this, this Dagger,
Given with a worthleſs Pledge thou ſince has ſtoln.
So I reſtore it back to thee again;
Swearing by all thoſe Powers which thou haſt violated,
Never from this curs'd Hour to hold Communion,
Friendſhip, or Intereſt with thee, tho' our Years
Were to exceed thoſe limited the World.
Take it —— Farewel —— for now I owe thee nothing.
*Jaff.* Say thou wilt live then.
*Pier.* For my Life, diſpoſe it
Juſt as thou wilt, becauſe 'tis what I am tir'd with.
*Jaff.* Oh *Pierre!*
*Pier.* No more.
*Jaff.* My Eyes won't loſe the Sight of thee,
But languiſh after thine, and ake with Gazing.
*Pier.* Leave me —— Nay, then thus, thus I throw thee from me;
And Curſes great as is thy Falſhood catch thee. [*Exit.*
*Jaff.* Amen.
He's gone, my Father, Friend, Preſerver,
And here's the Portion he has left me, [*Holds the Dagger up.*
This Dagger: Well remember'd, with this Dagger
I gave a ſolemn Vow of dire Importance;
Parted with this and *Belvidera* together.
Have a Care, Mem'ry, drive that Thought no farther;
No, I'll eſteem it as a Friend's laſt Legacy,
Treaſure it up within this wretched Boſom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my Heart,
That, when they meet, they ſtart not from each other.
So, now for Thinking: A Blow, call'd Traytor, Villain,
Coward, diſhonourable Coward, fough!

Oh! for a long ſound Sleep, and ſo forget it?
Down, buſy Devil.

*Enter* Belvidera.

*Belv.* Whither ſhall I fly?
Where hide me and my Miſeries together?
Where's now the *Roman* Conſtancy I boaſted?
Sunk into trembling Fears and Deſperation!
Not daring now to look up to that dear Face
Which us'd to ſmile even on my Faults, but, down
Bending theſe miſerable Eyes to Earth,
Muſt move in Penance, and implore much Mercy.

*Jaff.* Mercy! kind Heav'n has ſurely endleſs Stores
Hoarded for thee, Bleſſings yet untaſted:
Let Wretches, loaded hard with Guilt, as I am,
Bow with the Weight, and groan beneath the Burden,
Creep with a Remnant of that Strength th' have left,
Before the Footſtool of that Heav'n th' have injur'd.
Oh! *Belvidera!* I'm the wretched'ſt Creature
E'er crawl'd on Earth: Now, if thou'aſt Virtue, help me,
Take me into thy Arms, and ſpeak the Words of Peace
To my divided Soul, that wars within me,
And raiſes every Senſe to my Confuſion:
By Heav'n I'm tottering on the very Brink
Of Peace; and thou art all the Hold I've left.

*Belv.* Alas! I know thy Sorrows are moſt mighty;
I know th' haſt Cauſe to mourn, to mourn, my *Jaffier*,
With endleſs Cries, and never-ceaſing Wailing;
Thou'aſt loſt ——

*Jaff.* Oh! I've loſt what can't be counted;
My Friend too, *Belvidera*, that dear Friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my Health rejoic'd in,
Has us'd me like a Slave, ſhamefully us'd me:
'Twould break thy pitying Heart to hear the Story.
What ſhall I do? Reſentment, Indignation,
Love, Pity, Fear, and Mem'ry, how I've wrong'd him,
Diſtract my Quiet with the very Thought on't,
And tear my Heart to Pieces in my Boſom.

*Belv.* What has he done?

*Jaff.* Thou'dſt hate me, ſhould I tell thee.

*Belv* Why?

*Jaff.* Oh! he has us'd me! yet by Heav'n I bear it;

He

He has us'd me, *Belvidera!* But firſt ſwear
That, when I've told thee, thou wilt not loath me utterly,
Tho' vileſt Blots and Stains appear upon me;
But ſtill at leaſt, with charitable Goodneſs,
Be near me in the Pangs of my Affliction;
Nor ſcorn me, *Belvidera*, as he has done.

*Belv.* Have I then e'er been falſe, that now I'm doubted?
Speak, what's the Cauſe, I'm grown into Diſtruſt?
Why thought unfit to hear my Love's Complaining?

*Jaff.* Oh!

*Belv.* Tell me.

*Jaff.* Bear my Failings, for they're many,
Oh! my dear Angel! in that Friend I've loſt
All my Soul's Peace; for every Thought of him
Strikes my Senſe hard, and deads it in my Brains:
Would'ſt thou believe it?

*Belv.* Speak.

*Jaff.* Before we parted,
E're yet his Guards had led him to his Priſon,
Full of ſevereſt Sorrows for his Sufferings,
With Eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding Heart,
Humbling myſelf almoſt beneath my Nature,
As at his Feet I kneel'd, and ſu'd for Mercy;
Forgetting all our Friendſhip, all the Dearneſs
In which we've liv'd ſo many Years together,
With a reproachful Hand he daſh'd a Blow:
He ſtruck me, *Belvidera*, by Heav'n he ſtruck me!
Buffeted, call'd me Traytor, Villain, Coward.
Am I a Coward? Am I a Villain? Tell me:
Th'art the beſt Judge, and mad'ſt me, if I am ſo.
Damnation; Coward.

*Belv.* Oh! forgive him, *Jaffier*,
And, if his Sufferings wound thy Heart already,
What will they do To-morrow?

*Jaff.* Hah!

*Belv.* To-morrow,
When thou ſhalt ſee him ſtretch'd in all the Agonies
Of a tormenting and a ſhameful Death;
His bleeding Bowels, and his broken Limbs,
Inſulted o'er by a vile butchering Villain,

What will thy Heart do then! Oh! ſure 'twill ſtream
Like my Eyes now.
*Jaff.* What means thy dreadful Story?
Death, and To-morrow? Broken Limbs and Bowels?
Inſulted o'er by a vile butchering Villain?
By all my Fears I ſhall ſtart out to Madneſs
With bravely gueſſing, if the Truth's hid longer.
*Belv.* The faithleſs Senators, 'tis they've decreed it
They ſay, according to our Friends Requeſt,
They ſhall have Death, and no ignoble Bondage:
Declare their promis'd Mercy all as forfeited:
Falſe to their Oaths, and deaf to Interceſſion;
Warrants are paſs'd for publick Death To-morrow.
*Jaff.* Death! doom'd to die! condemn'd unheard! unpleaded!
*Belv.* Nay, cruel'ſt Racks and Torments are preparing
To force Confeſſion from their dying Pangs.
Oh! do not look ſo terribly upon me!
How your Lips ſhake, and all your Face diſorder'd!
What means my Love?
*Jaff.* Leave me, I charge thee leave me —— Strong Temptations
Wake in my Heart.
*Belv.* For what?
*Jaff.* No more, but leave me.
*Belv.* Why?
*Jaff.* Oh! by Heav'n I love thee with that Fondneſs,
I would not have thee ſtay a Moment longer,
Near theſe curs'd Hands: Are they not cold upon thee?
[*Pulls the Dagger half out of his Boſom, and puts it back again.*
*Belv.* No, everlaſting Comfort's in thy Arms.
To lean thus on thy Breaſt is ſofter Eaſe,
Than downy Pillows deck'd on Leaves of Roſes.
*Jaff.* Alas! thou think'ſt not of the Thorns 'tis fill'd with:
Fly, e're they gaul thee: There's a lurking Serpent
Ready to leap, and ſting thee to thy Heart:
Art thou not terrify'd?
*Belv.* No.
*Jaff.* Call to Mind

What

What thou haſt done, and whither thou haſt brought me.
*Belv.* Hah! (Miſchief?
*Jaff.* Where's my Friend? my Friend, thou ſmiling
Nay, ſhrink not, now 'tis too late, thou ſhoud'ſt have fled
When thy Guilt firſt had Cauſe; for dire Revenge
Is up, and raging for my Friend. He groans!
Hark how he groans, his Screams are in my Ears
Already; ſee, they've fix'd him on the Wheel,
And now they tear him——Murder! perjur'd Senate!
Murder—oh!—hark thee, Traitreſs, thou haſt done this;
Thanks to thy Tears, and falſe perſuading Love.
How her Eyes ſpeak! O thou bewitching Creature!
[*Fumbling for his Dagger.*
Madneſs can't hurt thee: Come thou little Trembler,
Creep even into my Heart, and there lie ſafe;
'Tis thy own Citadel——hah——yet ſtand off,
Heav'n muſt have Juſtice, and my broken Vows
Will ſink me elſe beneath its reaching Mercy;
I'll wink, and then 'tis done——
*Belv.* What means the Lord
Of me, my Life and Love? What's in thy Boſom,
Thou graſp'ſt at ſo? Nay, Why am I thus treated?
[*Draws the Dagger, offers to ſtab her.*
What wilt thou do? Ah! do not kill me, *Jaffier:*
Pity theſe panting Breaſts, and trembling Limbs,
That us'd to claſp thee when thy Looks were milder,
That yet hang heavy on my unpurg'd Soul;
And plunge it not into eternal Darkneſs.
*Jaff.* No, *Belvidera*, when we parted laſt,
I gave this Dagger with thee, as in Truſt,
To be thy Portion, if I e'er prov'd falſe.
On ſuch Condition was my Truth believ'd:
But now 'tis forfeited, and muſt be paid for.
[*Offers to ſtab her again.*
*Belv.* Oh! Mercy! [*Kneeling.*
*Jaff.* Nay, no Struggling.
*Belv.* Now then kill me,
[*Leaps upon his Neck, and kiſſes him.*
While thus I cling about thy cruel Neck,
Kiſs thy revengeful Lips, and die in Joys
Greater than any I can gueſs hereafter.

*Jaff.* I am, I am a Coward, witneſs't Heav'n,
Witneſs it, Earth, and ev'ry Being witneſs:
'Tis but one Blow! Yet, my immortal Love,
I cannot longer bear a Thought to harm thee.
[*He throws away the Dagger, and embraces her.*
The Seal of Providence is ſure upon thee;
And thou wert born for yet unheard of Wonders:
Oh! thou wert either born to ſave or damn me.
By all the Powers that's given thee o'er my Soul,
By thy reſiſtleſs Tears and conquering Smiles,
By the victorious Love that ſtill waits on thee;
Fly to thy cruel Father, ſave my Friend,
Or all our future Quiet's loſt for ever.
Fall at his Feet, cling round his reverend Knees:
Speak to him with thy Eyes, and with thy Tears
Melt his hard Heart, and wake dead Nature in him,
Cruſh him in th' Arms, torture him with thy Softneſs;

*Nor, till thy Prayers are granted, ſet him free,*
*But conquer him as thou haſt conquer'd me.* [Ex.

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## ACT V. SCENE I.

*Enter* Priuli *ſolus.*

*Pri.* WHY, cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy Days
Been lengthen'd to this ſad one? Oh! Diſ-
And deathleſs Infamy is fall'n upon me. (honour
Was it my Fault? Am I a Traytor? No.
But then, my only Child, my Daughter, wedded;
There my beſt Blood runs foul, and a Diſeaſe
Incurable has ſeiz'd upon my Memory,
To make it rot and ſtink to After-ages.
Curs'd be the fatal Minute when I got her;
Or would that I'ad been any thing but Man,
And rais'd an Iſſue which would ne'er have wrong'd me.
The miſerableſt Creatures (Man excepted)
Are not the leſs eſteem'd, tho' their Poſterity
Degenerate from the Virtues of their Fathers:
The vileſt Beaſts are happy in their Offſprings,

While

While only Man gets Traytors, Whores, and Villains.
Curs'd be the Name, and ſome ſwift Blow from Fate
Lay his Head deep, where mine may be forgotten.

*Enter* Belvidera *in a long Mourning Veil.*

*Belv.* He's there, my Father, my inhuman Father,
That for three Years has left an only Child
Expos'd to all the Outrages of Fate,
And cruel Ruin——oh!——

*Pri.* What Child of Sorrow
Art thou that com'ſt thus wrapp'd in Weeds of Sadneſs,
And mov'ſt as if thy Steps were towards a Grave?

*Belv.* A Wretch who from the very Top of Happineſs
Am fallen into the loweſt Depths of Miſery,
And want your pitying Hand to raiſe me up again.

*Pri.* Indeed thou talk'ſt as thou hadſt taſted Sorrows;
Would I could help thee.

*Belv.* 'Tis greatly in your Power:
The World too ſpeaks you charitable; and I,
Who ne'er aſk'd Alms before, in that dear Hope
Am come a Begging to you, Sir.

*Pri.* For what?

*Belv.* Oh! well regard me, in this Voice a ſtrange one?
Conſider too, when Beggars once pretend
A Caſe like mine, no little will content 'em.

*Pri.* What would'ſt thou beg for?

*Belv.* Pity and Forgiveneſs. [*Throws up her Veil.*
By the kind tender Names of Child and Father,
Hear my Complaints, and take me to your Love.

*Pri.* My Daughter!

*Belv.* Yes, your Daughter, by a Mother
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your Honour,
Obedient to your Will, kind to your Wiſhes,
Dear to your Arms. By all the Joys ſhe gave you,
When in her blooming Years ſhe was your Treaſure,
Look kindly on me; in my Face behold
The Lineaments of her's you've kiſs'd ſo often,
Pleading the Cauſe of your poor caſt-off Child.

*Pri.* Thou art my Daughter.

*Belv.* Yes——and you've oft told me
With Smiles of Love and chaſte paternal Kiſſes,
I'd much Reſemblance of my Mother.

*Pri.* Oh! Hadſt

Hadſt thou inherited her matchleſs Virtues,
I'ad too been bleſs'd.
*Belv.* Nay, do not call to Memory
My Diſobedience, but let Pity enter
Into your Heart, and quite deface the Impreſſion.
For could you think how mine's perplex'd, what Sadneſs,
Fears and Deſpairs diſtract the Peace within me,
Oh! you would take me into your dear, dear Arms,
Hover with ſtrong Compaſſion o'er your young One,
To ſhelter me with a protecting Wing,
From the black gather'd Storm, that's juſt, juſt breaking.
*Pri.* Don't talk thus.
*Belv.* Yes, I muſt, and you muſt hear too.
I have a Huſband.
*Pri.* Damn him.
*Belv.* Oh! do not curſe him;
He would not ſpeak ſo hard a Word towards you,
On any Terms, howe'er he deal with me.
*Pri.* Hah! what means my Child?
*Belv.* Oh! there's but this ſhort Moment
Twixt me and Fate: Yet ſend me not with Curſes
Down to my Grave; afford me one kind Bleſſing
Before we part: Juſt take me in your Arms,
And recommend me with a Prayer to Heav'n,
That I may die in Peace, and when I'm dead——
*Pri.* How my Soul's catch'd!
*Belv.* Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear Aſhes of my tender Mother.
She would have pitied me, had Fate yet ſpar'd her.
*Pri.* By Heav'n, my aking Heart forebodes much Miſchief.
Tell me thy Story, for I'm ſtill thy Father.
*Belv.* No, I'm ſtill contented.
*Pri.* Speak.
*Belv.* No Matter.
*Pri.* Tell me.
By yon bleſs'd Heav'n, my Heart runs o'er with Fondneſs.
*Belv.* Oh!
*Pri.* Utter't.
*Belv.* Oh! my Huſband, my dear Huſband,

Carries

Carries a Dagger in his once kind Boſom,
To pierce the Heart of your poor *Belvidera.*
*Pri.* Kill thee!
*Belv.* Yes, kill me. When he paſs'd his Faith
And Covenant againſt your State and Senate,
He gave me up as Hoſtage for his Truth:
With me a Dagger, and a dire Commiſſion,
Where'er he fail'd, to plunge it thro' this Boſom.
I learnt the Danger, choſe the Hour of Love
T'attempt his Heart, and bring it back to Honour.
Great Love prevail'd, and bleſs'd me with Succeſs;
He came, confeſs'd, betray'd his deareſt Friends,
For promis'd Mercy. Now they're doom'd to ſuffer,
Gall'd with Remembrance of what then was ſworn,
If they are loſt, he vows t'appeaſe the Gods
With this poor Life, and make my Blood th' Atonement.
*Pri.* Heav'ns!
*Belv.* Think you ſaw what paſs'd at our laſt Parting:
Think you beheld him like a raging Lion,
Pacing the Earth, and tearing up his Steps,
Fate in his Eyes, and roaring with the Pain
Of burning Fury: Think you ſaw his one Hand
Fix'd on my Throat, whilſt the extended other
Graſp'd a keen threat'ning Dagger; Oh! 'twas thus
We laſt embrac'd, when, trembling with Revenge,
He dragg'd me to the Ground, and at my Boſom
Preſented horrid Death; cry'd out, My Friends,
Where are my Friends? ſwore, wept, rag'd, threaten'd, lov'd;
For he yet lov'd, and that dear Love preſerv'd me,
To this laſt Trial of a Father's Pity.
I fear not Death, but cannot bear a Thought
That that dear Hand ſhould do th' unfriendly Office.
If I was ever then your Care, now hear me;
Fly to the Senate, ſave the promis'd Lives
Of his dear Friends, e're mine be made the Sacrifice.
*Pri.* Oh! my Heart's Comfort!
*Belv.* Will you not, my Father?
Weep not, but anſwer me.
*Pri.* By Heav'n I will.
Not one of 'em but what ſhall be immortal.

Canſt

Canſt thou forgive me all my Follies paſt,
I'll henceforth be indeed a Father; never,
Never more thus expoſe, but cheriſh thee,
Dear as the vital Warmth that feeds my Life,
Dear as theſe Eyes that weep in Fondneſs o'er thee:
Peace to thy Heart. Farewel.

*Belv.* Go, and remember
'Tis *Belvidera*'s Life her Father pleads for. *Ex. ſeverally*

*Enter* Antonio.

Hum, hum, hah!
Signor *Priuli*, my Lord *Priuli*, my Lord, my Lord, my Lord: Now we Lords love to call one another by our Titles. My Lord, my Lord, my Lord——Pox on him, I am a Lord as well as he. And ſo let him fiddle——I'll warrant him he's gone to the Senate-houſe, and I'll be there too, ſoon enough for ſome body. Odd——here's a tickling Speech about the Plot, I'll prove there's a Plot with a Vengeance,——Would I had it without Book; let me ſee——

Moſt Reverend Senators,
That there is a Plot, ſurely, by this Time, no Man that hath Eyes or Underſtanding in his Head will preſume to doubt; 'tis as plain as the Light in the Cucumber——no——hold there——Cucumber does not come in yet ——'tis as plain as the Light in the Sun, or as the Man in the Moon, even at Noon-day. It is indeed a Pumkin-Plot, which, juſt as it was mellow, we have gather'd, and now we have gather'd it, prepar'd and dreſs'd it, ſhall we throw it like a pickled Cucumber out at the Window? No: That it is not only a bloody, horrid, execrable, damnable, and audacious Plot, but it is, as I may ſo ſay, a ſaucy Plot: And we all know, moſt Reverend Fathers, that what is Sauce for a Gooſe, is Sauce for a Gander: Therefore I ſay, as thoſe blood-thirſty Ganders of the Conſpiracy would have deſtroyed us Geeſe of the Senate, let us make haſte to deſtroy them; ſo I humbly move for Hanging——Hah! hurry durry ——I think this will do; though I was ſomething out at firſt, about the Sun and the Cucumber.

*Enter* Aquilina.

*Aqui.* Good-morrow, Senator.

*Ant.*

*Ant.* *Nacky*, my dear *Nacky*; Morrow, *Nacky*; odd I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very jovial——ha a a a a——kiſs me, *Nacky*; how doſt thou do, my little tory rory Strumpet? kiſs me, I ſay, Huſſy, kiſs me.

*Aqui.* Kiſs me, *Nacky!* hang you, Sir Coxcomb, hang you, Sir.

*Ant.* Haity taity, is it ſo indeed? With all my Heart, Faith——*Hey, then up go we*, Faith——*Hey, then up go we*, dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*

*Aqui.* Signor.

*Ant.* Madona.

*Aqui.* Do you intend to die in your Bed?

*Ant.* About threeſcore Years hence much may be done, my Dear.

*Aqui.* You'll be hang'd, Signor.

*Ant.* Hang'd, Sweet-heart, prithee be quiet; hang'd quoth-a, that's a merry Conceit with all my Heart; why thou jok'ſt, *Nacky*; thou art given to Joking, I'll ſwear; well, I proteſt, *Nacky*, nay, I muſt proteſt, and will proteſt, that I love Joking dearly, Man. And I love thee for Joking, and I'll kiſs thee for Joking, and towſe thee for Joking; and odd, I have a deviliſh Mind to take thee aſide about that Buſineſs for Joking too, odd I have; and *Hey, then up go we*, dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*

*Aqui.* See you this, Sir? [*Draws a Dagger.*

*Ant.* O Laud, a Dagger! Oh! Laud! it is naturally my Averſion, I cannot endure the Sight on't; hide it for Heaven's ſake, I cannot look that Way till it be gone——hide it, hide it, oh! oh! hide it.

*Aqui.* Yes, in your Heart I'll hide it.

*Ant.* My Heart! what hide a Dagger in my Heart's Blood!

*Aqui.* Yes, in thy Heart, thy Throat, thou pamper'd Devil;
Thou haſt help'd to ſpoil my Peace, and I'll have Vengeance
On thy curs'd Life, for all the bloody Senate,
The perjur'd faithleſs Senate: Where's my Lord,
My Happineſs, my Love, my God, my Heroe,
Doom'd, by thy accurſed Tongue among the reſt,

T' a

T' a ſhameful Rack? By all the Rage that's in me,
I'll be whole Years in murdering thee.

*Ant.* Why, *Nacky*,
Wherefore ſo paſſionate? What have I done? What's the Matter, my dear *Nacky?* Am not I thy Love, thy Happineſs, thy Lord, thy Heroe, thy Senator, and every thing in the World, *Nacky.*

*Aqui.* Thou! think'ſt thou, thou art fit to meet my Joys;
To bear the eager Claſps of my Embraces?
Give me *Pierre*, or——

*Ant.* Why, he's to be hang'd, little *Nacky*;
Truſs'd up for Treaſon, and ſo forth, Child.

*Aqui.* Thou ly'ſt; ſtop down thy Throat that helliſh Sentence,
Or 'tis thy laſt: Swear that my Love ſhall live,
Or thou art dead.

*Ant.* Ah! h h h.

*Aqui.* Swear to recall his Doom;
Swear at my Feet, and tremble at my Fury.

*Ant.* I do; now if ſhe would but kick a little bit, one Ah! h h h. [Kick now.

*Aqui.* Swear, or——

*Ant.* I do by theſe dear fragrant Foots [*Nacky.*
And little Toes, ſweet as, e e e e, my *Nacky*, *Nacky*,

*Aqui.* How! [and Troth.

*Ant.* Nothing but untie thy Shoe-ſtrings a little, Faith
That's all, that's all, as I hope to live, *Nacky*, that's all.

*Aqui.* Nay, then——

*Ant.* Hold, hold; thy Love, thy Lord, thy Heroe
Shall be preſerv'd and ſafe.

*Aqui.* Or may this Poniard
Ruſt in thy Heart.

*Ant.* With all my Soul.

*Aqui.* Farewel. [*Ex.* Aquil.

*Ant.* Adieu: Why what a bloody minded inveterate termagant Strumpet have I been plagu'd with! oh! h h! Yet more! nay, then I die, I die——I am dead already. [*Stretches out himſelf.*

*Enter* Jaffier.

*Jaff.* Final Deſtruction ſeize on all the World,
Bend down, ye Heav'ns, and, ſhutting round this Earth,
Cruſh

Cruſh the vile Globe into its firſt Confuſion;
Scorch it with elemental Flames to one curs'd Cinder,
And all us little Creepers in't call'd Men,
Burn, burn to nothing: But let *Venice* burn
Hotter than all the reſt: Here kindle Hell,
Ne'er to extinguiſh; and let Souls hereafter
Groan here, in all thoſe Pains which mine feels now.

*Enter* Belvidera.

*Belv.* My Life—— [*Meeting him.*
*Jaff.* My Plague—— [*Turning from her.*
*Belv.* Nay, then I ſee my Ruin:
If I muſt die!
*Jaff.* No, Death's this Day too buſy;
Thy Father's ill-tim'd Mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy Labours tho', and him too:
But all my poor betray'd unhappy Friends
Have Summons to prepare for Fate's black Hour;
And yet I live.
*Belv.* Then be the next my Doom:
I ſee thou haſt paſs'd my Sentence in thy Heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead againſt it,
But with the humbleſt, moſt obedient Patience
Meet thy dear Hands, and kiſs 'em when they wound me.
Indeed I am willing, but I beg thee do it
With ſome Remorſe; and, when thou giv'ſt the Blow,
View me with Eyes of a relenting Love,
And ſhew me Pity, for 'twill ſweeten Juſtice.
*Jaff.* Shew Pity to thee?
*Belv.* Yes, and when thy Hands,
Charg'd with my Fate, come trembling to the Deed.
As thou haſt done a Thouſand Thouſand dear Times
To this poor Breaſt, when kinder Rage has brought thee,
When our ſtung Hearts have leap'd to meet each other,
And melting Kiſſes ſeal'd our Lips together;
When Joys have left me gaſping in thy Arms:
So let my Death come now, and I'll not ſhrink from't.
*Jaff.* Nay, *Belvidera*, do not fear my Cruelty,
Nor let the Thoughts of Death perplex thy Fancy;
But anſwer me to what I ſhall demand,
With a firm Temper and unſhaken Spirit.
*Belv.* I will when I've done weeping——

*Jaff.* Fie, no more on't——
How long is't ſince that miſerable Day
We wedded firſt?
*Belv.* Oh! h h!
*Jaff.* Nay, keep in thy Tears,
Leſt they unman me too.
*Belv.* Heav'n knows, I cannot;
The Words you utter ſound ſo very ſadly,
The Streams will follow——
*Jaff.* Come I'll kiſs 'em dry then.
*Belv.* But was't a miſerable Day?
*Jaff.* A curs'd one.
*Belv.* I thought it otherwiſe; and you've oft ſworn,
In the tranſporting Hours of warmeſt Love,
When ſure you ſpoke the Truth, you've ſworn you bleſs'd (it.
*Jaff.* 'Twas a raſh Oath.
*Belv.* Then why am I not curs'd too?
*Jaff.* No, *Belvidera*, by th' eternal Truth,
I doat with too much Fondneſs.
*Belv.* Still ſo kind!
Still then do you love me?
*Jaff.* Nature, in her Workings,
Inclines not with more Ardour to Creation,
Than I do now towards thee: Man ne'er was bleſs'd,
Since the firſt Pair firſt met, as I have been.
*Belv.* Then ſure you will not curſe me?
*Jaff.* No, I'll bleſs thee.
I came on Purpoſe, *Belvidera*, to bleſs thee.
'Tis now, I think, three Years we've liv'd together.
*Belv.* And may no fatal Minute ever part us,
Till reverend grown, for Age and Love, we go
Down to one Grave, as our laſt Bed together;
There ſleep in Peace, till an eternal Morning.
*Jaff.* When will that be? [*Sighing.*
*Belv.* I hope long Ages hence.
*Jaff.* Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me
Thy very Fears) us'd thee with tender'ſt Love?
Did e'er my Soul riſe up in Wrath againſt thee?
Did I e'er frown when *Belvidera* ſmil'd?
Or, by the leaſt unfriendly Word, betray
Abating Paſſion? Have I ever wrong'd thee?
*Belv.* No. *Jaff.*

*Jaff.* Has my Heart, or have my Eyes ever wander'd
To any other Woman?
*Belv.* Never, never — I were the worſt of falſe Ones,
ſhould I accuſe thee.
I own I've been too happy, bleſs'd above
My Sex's Charter.
*Jaff.* Did I not ſay I came to bleſs thee?
*Belv.* Yes
*Jaff.* Then hear me, bounteous Heav'n:
Pour down your Bleſſings on this beauteous Head,
Where eve-laſting Sweets are always ſpringing,
With a continual giving Hand: Let Peace,
Honour, and Safety always hover round her;
Feed her with Plenty, let her Eyes ne'er ſee
A Sight of Sorrow, nor her Heart know Mourning:
Crown all her Days with Joy, her Nights with Reſt,
Harmleſs as her own Thoughts; and prop her Virtue,
To bear the Loſs of one that too much lov'd;
And comfort her with Patience in our Parting.
*Belv.* How, Parting, Parting!
*Jaff.* Yes, for ever Parting;
I have ſworn, *Belvidera*, by yon Heav'n,
That beſt can tell how much I loſe, to leave thee,
We part this Hour for ever.
*Belv.* Oh! call back
Your cruel Bleſſing; ſtay with me and curſe me!
*Jaff.* No, 'tis reſolv'd.
*Belv.* Then hear me too, juſt Heav'n:
Pour down your Curſes on this wretched Head
With never-ceaſing Vengeance; let Deſpair,
Danger, or Infamy, nay all, ſurround me;
Starve me with Wantings; let my Eyes ne'er ſee
A Sight of Comfort, nor my Heart know Peace,
But daſh my Days with Sorrow, Nights with Horrors
Wild as my own Thoughts now, and let looſe Fury
To make me mad enough for what I loſe,
If I muſt loſe him. If I muſt? I will not.
Oh! turn and hear me!
*Jaff.* Now hold, Heart, or never.
*Belv.* By all the tender Days we've liv'd together,
By all our charming Nights, and Joys that crown'd 'em,

Pity my ſad Condition; ſpeak, but ſpeak.

*Jaff.* Oh! h h!

*Belv.* By theſe Arms that now cling round thy Neck,
By this dear Kiſs, and by Ten-thouſand more,
By theſe poor ſtreaming Eyes——

*Jaff.* Murder! unhold me:
By th' immortal Deſtiny that doom'd me
[*Draws his Dagger.*
To this curs'd Minute, I'll not live one longer;
Reſolve to let me go, or ſee me fall——

*Belv.* Hold, Sir, be patient.

*Jaff.* Hark, the diſmal Bell [*Paſſing-Bell tolls.*
Tolls out for Death! I muſt attend its Call too;
For my poor Friend, my dying *Pierre*, expects me;
He ſent a Meſſage to require I'd ſee him
Before he dy'd, and take his laſt Forgiveneſs.
Farewel, for ever.

*Belv.* Leave thy Dagger with me.
Bequeath me ſomething——Not one Kiſs at Parting?
Oh! my poor Heart, when wilt thou break?
[*Going out, looks back at her.*

*Jaff.* Yet ſtay.
We have a Child as yet a tender Infant;
Be a kind Mother to him when I am gone,
Breed him in Virtue and the Paths of Honour,
But let him never know his Father's Story;
I charge thee guard him from the Wrongs my Fate
May do his future Fortune, or his Name.
Now—— nearer yet—— [*Approaching each other.*
Oh! that my Arms were riveted
Thus round thee ever! but my Friends! my Oath!
This, and no more [*Kiſſes her.*

*Belv.* Another, ſure another,
For that poor little One you've ta'en ſuch Care of,
I'll give't him truly.

*Jaff.* So, now Farewel.

*Belv.* For ever?

*Jaff.* Heav'n knows for ever; all good Angels guard thee [*Exit.*

*Belv.* All ill ones ſure had Charge of me this Moment.
Curs'd be my Days, and doubly curs'd my Nights,
Which

Which I muſt now mourn out in widow'd Tears:
Blaſted be every Herb, and Fruit, and Tree,
Curs'd be the Rain that falls upon the Earth,
And may the general Curſe reach Man and Beaſt;
Oh! give me Daggers, Fire or Water:
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the Waves
Huzzing and boming round my ſinking Head,
Till I deſcended to the peaceful Bottom!
Oh! there's all Quiet, here all Rage and Fury;
The Air's too thin, and pierces my weak Brain:
I long for thick ſubſtantial Sleep: Hell! Hell!
Burſt from the Center, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half ſo hot, ſo mad as I am,

*Enter* Priuli *and Servants.*

Who's there? [*They ſeize her.*

*Pri.* Run, ſeize, and bring her ſafely Home,
Guard her as you would Life: Alas, poor Creature!

*Belv.* What to my Huſband? then conduct me quickly;
Are all Things ready? Shall we die moſt gloriouſly?
Say not a Word of this to my old Father:
Murmuring Streams, ſoft Shades, and ſpringing Flowers,
Lutes, Laurels, Seas of Milk, and Ships of Amber. [*Ex.*

SCENE *opening diſcovers a Scaffold, and a Wheel prepared for the Executing of* Pierre; *then enter Officers,* Pierre *and Guards, a Friar, Executioner, and a great Rabble.*

*Offi.* Room, Room there——ſtand all by, make Room for the Priſoner.

*Pier.* My Friend not yet come?

*Friar.* Why are you ſo obſtinate?

*Pier.* Why you ſo troubleſome, that a poor Wretch can't die in Peace,
But you, like Ravens, will be croaking round him?——

*Friar.* Yet Heav'n——

*Pier.* I tell thee, Heav'n and I are Friends:
I ne'er broke Peace with't yet by cruel Murders,
Rapine or Perjury, or vile Deceiving:
But liv'd in moral Juſtice towards all Men;
Nor am a Foe to the moſt ſtrong Believers,
Howe'er my own ſhort ſighted Faith confine me.

*Friar* But an All-ſeeing Judge——

*Pier.* You ſay my Conſcience
Muſt be my Accuſer: I have ſearch'd that Conſcience,
And find no Records there of Crimes that ſcare me.

*Friar.* 'Tis ſtrange you ſhould want Faith.

*Pier.* You want to lead
My Reaſon blind-fold, like a hamper'd Lion,
Check'd of its nobler Vigour; then, when bated
Down to obedient Tameneſs, make it couch,
And ſhew ſtrange Tricks, which you call Signs of Faith.
So ſilly Souls are gull'd, and you get Money.
Away, no more: Captain, I'd have hereafter
This Fellow write no Lyes of my Converſion,
Becauſe he has crept upon my troubled Hours.

*Enter* Jaffier.

*Jaff.* Hold: Eyes be dry;
Heart ſtrengthen me to bear
This hideous Sight, and humble me: Take
The laſt Forgiveneſs of a dying Friend,
Betray'd by my vile Falſhood to his Ruin.
Oh! *Pierre?*

*Pier.* Yet nearer.

*Jaff.* Crawling on my Knees,
And proſtrate on the Earth, let me approach thee:
How ſhall I look up to thy injur'd Face,
That alway us'd to ſmile with Friendſhip on me?
It darts an Air of ſo much manly Virtue,
That I, methinks, look little in thy Sight,
And Stripes are fitter for me than Embraces.

*Pier.* Dear to my Arms, tho' thou'ſt undone my Fame,
I can't forget to love thee: Prithee, *Jaffier*,
Forgive that filthy blow my Paſſion dealt thee;
I am now preparing for the Land of Peace,
And fain would have the charitable Wiſhes
Of all good Men, like thee, to bleſs my Journey.

*Jaff.* Good! I am the vileſt Creature, worſe than e'er
Suffer'd the ſhameful Fate thou'rt going to taſte of.
Why was I ſent for to be us'd thus kindly?
Call, call me Villain, as I am; deſcribe
The foul Complexion of my hateful Deeds;
Lead me to th' Rack, and ſtretch me in thy Stead,

I've

I've Crimes enough to give it its full Load,
And do it Credit: Thou wilt but ſpoil the Uſe on't,
And honeſt Men hereafter bear its Figure
About 'em as a Charm from treacherous Friendſhip.

*Offi.* The Time grows ſhort, your Friends are dead already.

*Jaff.* Dead!

*Pier.* Yes, dead, *Jaffier*; they've all dy'd like Men too Worthy their Character.

*Jaff.* And what muſt I do?

*Pier.* Oh! *Jaffier!*

*Jaff.* Speak aloud thy burden'd Soul,
And tell thy Troubles to thy tortur'd Friend.

*Pier.* Friend! Could'ſt thou yet be a Friend, a generous Friend.
I might hope Comfort from thy noble Sorrows.
Heav'n knows I want a Friend.

*Jaff.* And a kind one,
That would not thus ſcorn my repenting Virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my Thoughts are idle.

*Pier.* No! Live I charge thee, *Jaffier.*

*Jaff.* Yes, I will live:
But it ſhall be to ſee thy Fall reveng'd
At ſuch a Rate as *Venice* long ſhall groan for.

*Pier.* Wilt thou?

*Jaff.* I will, by Heav'n.

*Pier.* Then ſtill thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh!—yet—ſhall I truſt thee?

*Jaff.* No; I've been falſe already.

*Pier.* Do'ſt thou love me?

*Jaff.* Rip up my Heart, and ſatisfy thy Doubtings.

*Pier.* Curſe on this Weakneſs. [*He weeps.*

*Jaff.* Tears! Amazement! Tears!
I never ſaw thee melted thus before;
And know there's ſomething labouring in thy Boſom
That muſt have Vent: Tho' I am a Villain, tell me.

*Pier.* See'ſt thou that Engine? [*Pointing to the Wheel.*

*Jaff.* Why?

*Pier.* Is't fit a Soldier, who has liv'd with Honour,
Fought Nations Quarrels, and been crown'd with Conqueſt,
Be expos'd a common Carcaſe on a Wheel?

*Jaff.*

*Jaff.* Hah!
*Pier.* Speak: Is't fitting?
*Jaff.* Fitting?
*Pier.* Yes, is't fitting?
*Jaff.* What's to be done?
*Pier.* I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble to preſerve my Memory
From the Diſgrace that's ready to attaint it.
*Offi.* The Day grows late, Sir.
*Pier.* I'll make haſte. Oh! *Jaffier!*
Tho' thou'ſt betrayed me, do me ſome Way Juſtice.
*Jaff.* No more of that: Thy Wiſhes ſhall be ſatisfy'd;
I have a Wife, and ſhe ſhall bleed; my Child too
Yield up his little Throat, and all
T' appeaſe thee——— [*Going away,* Pierre *holds him.*
*Pier.* No—this—no more. [*He whiſpers* Jaffier.
*Jaff.* Hah! Is't then ſo?
*Pier.* Moſt certainly.
*Jaff.* I'll do't.
*Pier.* Remember.
*Offi.* Sir.
*Pier.* Come, now I am ready.
[*He and* Jaffier *aſcend the Scaffold.*
Captain, you ſhould be a Gentleman of Honour,
Keep off the Rabble, that I may have Room
To entertain my Fate, and die with Decency.
Come, [*Takes off his Gown, Executioner prepares*
*Friar.* Son. [*to bind him.*
*Pier.* Hence, Tempter.
*Offi.* Stand off, Prieſt.
*Pier.* I thank you, Sir;
You'll think on't? [*to* Jaffier.
*Jaff.* 'Twon't grow ſtale before To-morrow.
*Pier.* Now, *Jaffier!* now I am going. Now——
[*Executioner having bound him.*
*Jaff.* Have at thee,
Thou honeſt Heart, then——here—— [*Stabs him.*
And this is well too. [*Then Stabs himſelf.*
*Friar.* Damnable Deed!
*Pier.* Now thou haſt indeed been faithful.

This

This was done nobly——We have deceiv'd the Senate.

*Jaff.* Bravely.

*Pier.* Ha ha ha——oh! oh!—— [*Dies*

*Jaff.* Now, ye curs'd Rulers,
Thus of the Blood y'ave ſhed I make Libation,
And ſprinkle't mingling: May it reſt upon you,
And all your Race; be henceforth Peace a Stranger
Within your Walls; let Plagues and Famine waſte
Your Generations —— O poor *Belvidera!*
Sir, I have a Wife, bear this in Safety to her,
A Token that with my dying Breath I bleſs'd her,
And the dear little Infant left behind me.
I am ſick——I'm quiet—— [Jaffier *dies.*

*Offi.* Bear this News to the Senate,
And guard their Bodies till there's farther Orders:
Heav'n grant I die ſo well. [*Scene ſhuts upon them.*

*Soft Muſick. Enter* Belvidera *diſtracted, led by two of her Women,* Priuli *and Servants.*

*Pri.* Strengthen her Heart with Patience, pitying Heav'n.

*Belv.* Come, come, come, come, come, nay come to Bed,
Prithee my Love. The Winds; hark how they whiſtle;
And the Rain beats: Oh! how the Weather ſhrinks me!
You are angry now, who cares? Piſh, no indeed.
Chuſe then, I ſay you ſhall not go, you ſhall not.
Whip your Ill-nature; get you gone then; oh!
[Jaffier's *Ghoſt riſes.*
Are you return'd? See, Father, here he's come again,
Am I to blame to love him? Oh thou dear one.
[*Ghoſt ſinks.*
Why do you fly me? Are you angry ſtill then?
*Jaffier,* where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's there ſomewhere.
Stand off I ſay: What gone? Remember't, Tyrant:
I may revenge myſelf for this Trick one Day.
I'll do't——I'll do't. *Renault*'s a naſty Fellow;
Hang him, hang him, hang him.

*Enter Officer and others.*

*Pri.* News, what News? [*Officer whiſpers* Priuli.

*Offi.* Moſt ſad, Sir;

*Jaffier,*

*Jaffier*, upon the Scaffold, to prevent
A ſhameful Death, ſtabb'd *Pierre*, and next himſelf;
Both fell together.

*Pri.* Daughter.

*Belv.* Ha! look there!

[*The Ghoſts of* Jaffier *and* Pierre *riſe together, both bloody.*
My Husband bloody, and his Friend too! Murder!
Who has done this? Speak to me, thou ſad Viſion;
[*Ghoſts ſink.*
On theſe poor trembling Knees I beg it: Vaniſh'd—
Here they went down: Oh! I'll dig, dig the Den up.
You ſhan't delude me thus. Hoa, *Jaffier*, *Jaffier*.
Peep up, and give me but a Look. I have him!
I've got him, Father: Oh! now how I'll ſmuggle him!
My Love! my Dear! my Bleſſing! help me! help me!
They have hold on me, and drag me to the Bottom.
Nay—now they pull ſo hard—farewel— [*She dies.*

*Maid.* She's dead,
Breathleſs and dead.

*Pri.* Then guard me from the Sight on't:
Lead me into ſome Place that's fit for Mourning;
Where the free Air, Light, and the chearful Sun
May never enter: Hang it round with Black?
Set up one Taper, that may light a Day,
As long as I've to live: And there all leave me:

*Sparing no Tears, when you this Tale relate,*
*But bid all cruel Fathers dread my Fate.*

*Exeunt omnes.*

EPI-

# EPILOGUE.

*THE Text is done, and now for Application,*
*And, when that's ended, paſs your Approbation.*
*Tho' the Conſpiracy's prevented here,*
*Methinks I ſee another hatching there:*
*And there's a certain Faction fain would ſway,*
*If they had Strength enough, and damn this Play:*
*But this the Author bid me boldly ſay,*
*If any take this Plainneſs in ill Part,*
*He's glad on't from the Bottom of his Heart:*
*Poets in Honour of the Truth ſhould write,*
*With the ſame Spirit brave Men for it fight.*
*And tho' againſt him cauſeleſs Hatreds riſe,*
*And daily where he goes of late he ſpies*
*The Scowles of ſullen and revengeful Eyes;*
*'Tis what he knows, with much Contempt, to bear,*
*And ſerves a Cauſe too good to let him fear.*
*He fears no Poiſon from an incens'd Drab,*
*No Ruffian's five Foot Sword, nor Raſcal's Stab;*
*Nor any other Snares of Miſchief laid,*
*Not a* Roſe-Alley-*Cudgel Ambuſcade.*
*From any private Cauſe where Malice reigns,*
*Or general Pique all Blockheads have to Brains:*
*Nothing ſhall damn his Pen, when Truth does call,*
*No, not the* † *Picture-mangler at* Guildhall.
*The Rebel-Tribe, of which that Vermin's one,*
*Have now ſet forward, and their Courſe begun;*

† The Raſcal that cut the Duke of *York*'s Picture.

*And*

*And while that Prince's Figure they deface,*
*As they before had maſſacred his Name,*
*Durſt their baſe Fears but look him in the Face,*
*They'd uſe his Perſon as they've us'd his Fame:*

*A Face in which ſuch Line'ments they read*
*Of that great Martyr's, whoſe rich Blood they ſhed,*
*That their rebellious Hate they ſtill retain,*
*And in his Son would murder him again.*
*With Indignation then let each brave Heart,*
*Rouze, and unite, to take his injur'd Part;*
*'Till Royal Love and Goodneſs call him Home,*
*And Songs of Triumph meet him as he come:*
*'Till Heav'n his Honour and our Peace reſtore,*
*And Villains never wrong his Virtue more.*

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

FINIS.